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An official opening night with a Bollywood theme took place at the week-

of Harji and her being known for the onion bhajis, which she makes. She is often called Harji Barji by her friends. Harjinder, aged 45, said she

She said the opening night went well, adding: "The evening was a success very colourful and different."

More than 20,000 people are expected to take part and double Commonwealth gold medallist triathlete Jodie is also attending.

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CONTACT US

Have you got a story or an event you want covered? The Chronicle and Express & Star have a team of reporters covering Halesowen who can help:

Heather Large: 01384 353203
heather.large@expressandstar.co.uk
Alex Ross: 01384 353207
alex-ross@expressandstar.co.uk
Andrew Turton: 01384 353202
andrew.turton@expressandstar.co.uk
Lee Watton: 01384 353230
lee.watton@expressandstar.co.uk
Tom Mason: 01902 319550
tom.mason@expressandstar.co.uk
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Advertising
 Nicky Cope
 01902 319573
 Email nicola.cope@expressandstar.co.uk

Motoring:
 Liz Barratt
 Tel: 01384 353244
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More illegal immigrants found in lorry

SEVEN suspected illegal immigrants were discovered in the back of a lorry near Stourbridge.

The driver of the lorry pulled over on a lay-by on the A491 near Belbroughton, after hearing noises in his trailer on Friday at about 2.20pm.

West Mercia Police discovered seven adults from Iran in the back of the vehicle. The lorry had trav-

elled into the UK from Poland. Paramedics were called to check them over before they were handed over to Border Agency officials.

Kieren Bodill, spokesman at West Mercia Police, said: "West Mercia Police were called to a lorry on the A491. The driver had heard people in the back of lorry and when police arrived a number of suspected illegal immigrants were discovered."

In another recent incident 13 suspected illegal immigrants were rescued from the back of a refrigerated lorry on the M6 when police stopped the lorry between Junctions 10A and 11.

South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson said it showed "very clearly the need for tighter security measures at borders".

It comes just a couple of weeks

after an illegal immigrant managed to hitch a 200-mile ride to the UK on a bus full of students from Perry Beeches Academy in Great Barr.

The 35-year-old man, believed to be from Sudan, had ridden on the vehicle's axle after climbing underneath near the Eurotunnel terminal near Calais. He emerged when the school coach arrived back at Perry Beeches Academy in Birmingham.

'Slanguage' move sees school results improve

THEY were asked to stop using Black Country slang words in class – and now results are speaking for themselves as school bosses reveal pupils' exams results are on the up.

Headteacher John White sparked debate last year when he issued a 'Mind Your Slanguage' guide for parents at Colley Lane Primary School in Halesowen in a bid to raise standards of English.

Town name will return to college

THE Stourbridge College name will be returning to the town.

It comes as the first phase of a £6.5 million revamp of the Hagley Road campus was unveiled.

The college took on the Birmingham Metropolitan College name following a merger with the city college last year.

Heritage

But principal at Birmingham Metropolitan College Andrew Cleaves has revealed that the Stourbridge College name will return to the town.

He said: "I have been talking to staff, students and stakeholders in the Black Country in order to gauge people's perceptions of the college and its provision and role in the community.

"I've had a lot of interesting and enlightening feedback, the crux of which appears to be that our college is important to the town and that its name should reflect its heritage and status."

The college also has an academy in the listed Piano Building in Kidderminster town centre and an art and design campus in Brierley Hill.

Among those who got involved in the debate was Dudley North MP Ian Austin, who backed the idea, claiming learning how to present an argument properly and having a good vocabulary is important.

This week, 11 months on from the school move, Mr White revealed that reading levels at Key Stage 2 had improved by seven per cent, with 79 per cent of children achieving the expected level 4 grade.

The number of children achieving the higher level five grade in reading went up nine per cent to 41 per cent.

Phonics checks for Year 1 children also ended up with good results for the school in reading, with 85 per cent of pupils achieving the expected level 2 at Key Stage 1.

In the foundation years, the level of pupils achieving the expected levels in each of seven subjects was higher than the borough average.

Mr White said: "Firstly can I say there was no ban. That term was only used by the media to sensationalise the whole issue.

"Secondly we were always very clear about valuing the local dialect and only wanted to improve our children's life chances. This was about a time and a place for the correct formal or informal language. Our intention was not to remove any local culture or identity but to give our children the spoken language skills to compete against the best."

Hospital staff on picket lines



Hospital staff cheer as motorists show support at Sandwell General Hospital

THIRTEEN operations had to be rearranged as NHS staff went on strike over pay for the first time in more than 30 years.

Picket lines formed at Sandwell Hospital, Rowley Regis Hospital and City Hospital for Monday's industrial action which involved six unions, including Unison and Unite.

The strikes meant five theatre sessions involving the 13 patients had to be postponed.

A spokesman for Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital NHS Trust said:

"We have taken the decision to reschedule five out of our 16 planned theatre sessions which affects 13 patients, to whom we have apologised."

Meanwhile, a number of volunteers were on hand in Sandwell and Rowley Regis to help with handing out breakfasts and other services, but only two were required.

There was also a picket line at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley, though one ambulance crew left to respond to an emergency, helping a man who had a diabetic fit.

Offers of free IVF facing a cut back

THE number of free cycles of IVF treatment offered to couples in Sandwell has been halved.

The Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group said it wanted to bring the borough in line with Birmingham.

Patients living in Sandwell currently have two rounds free on the NHS while patients in Birmingham only have one.

The reduction from two to one cycles will come into force in May 2016.

Andrew Williams, of Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG, said: "The guidance we have been given is that we should not be committing to more than one cycle."

Members of Sandwell Council's health scrutiny committee had argued for couples to have two rounds.

Councillor Elaine Costigan said: "We fought for two rounds because that is what we believe couples want."

A consultation on the plans took place earlier this year when 78 per cent of all respondents agreed that the policy for IVF treatment needed to be consistent. The results showed that 34 per cent agreed with one cycle while 48 per cent wanted to increase the number.

MP supports illness moves

NEW standards in mental health services have been welcomed by an MP chairing an influential committee.

James Morris, who represents Halesowen and Rowley Regis, said the health and care system had been 'stacked against' people with mental health problems for too long.

Mr Morris, who chairs the All Party Parliamentary Group on Mental Health, said: "The introduction of new access and waiting times standards in mental health services is a step in the right direction."

Real ale festival

A HALESOWEN real ale pub, which dates back to 1830, is staging a three-day beer festival later this month.

There will be 14 real ales on tap and another 18 available at the Waggon and Horses in Stourbridge Road from October 23 to 25.

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Driver on heroin is sent to jail after chase

A BANNED driver was on heroin when he smashed his car into a gate and lamp post after leading police on a high speed chase through Dudley, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Artaf Hussain, of Slater Street, Tipton, was spotted driving erratically on the Dudley Southern Bypass late on August 27 last year.

When police put on their sirens the 28-year-old sped off in the direction of Netherton. Hussain reached speeds of up to 60mph during the mile-long pursuit down Cinder Bank, swerving across the road before turning onto The Sling.

Jailing Hussain for 14 months and banning him from driving for two years, Judge John Warner told him: "You swerved into a single lane and collided with a gate and lamp post. To make matters worse you then tried to pretend you were not the driver."

Hussain was serving a six month driving ban when he committed the offence. He had been disqualified on two previous occasions.

Mr Brett Wilson, defending, said Hussain's behaviour had been affected by the fact that he was smoking heroin before the incident.

He was found guilty after a trial.

Bid to cut energy bills

A £430,000 trial scheme aimed at reducing energy bills at schools in Dudley is being launched.

New high-efficiency lighting will be installed and insulation improved at 10 pilot schools in the borough.

Dudley Council has secured an interest-free loan towards the work.

Councillor Tim Crumpton, cabinet member for children's services, said: "We're pleased to announce the loan has now been approved and we are now in the process of carrying out detailed lighting designs at the pilot schools."

£2m flats project

WORK on a £2.1 million scheme to build homes for people with learning disabilities has begun.

Sites in Norfolk Road, Willaston, and at The Walk, Sedgley, have been earmarked for flats. Dudley Council has been awarded £385,000 towards the work.

Miliband delivers apprenticeships pledge



Mr Miliband talks to apprentice Lee Salt, from Rowley Regis

ED Miliband pledged to create a new wave of apprenticeships and called for schools to steer young people towards them when he visited Dudley College.

The Labour leader said that his party in Government would provide apprenticeships with at least one apprenticeship created for every £1 million spent on projects, such as high speed rail.

Labour wants to pass a law to make large companies train a new apprentice for each skilled worker they hire from outside the European Union. It contrasts with the Tory proposal which is to create three million apprenticeships but funded with a further cap on welfare payments.

The Labour leader praised the Ladder for the Black Country project, backed by the Express & Star, which has seen dozens of companies come together to create more than 122 positions in just over three weeks.

Initiative

"Congratulations," Mr Miliband said. "It's a brilliant initiative."

Under Tony Blair there was a surge in the number of young people going to university instead of into work.

Mr Miliband said: "We rightly had a focus on going to university and that's important but the problem is that, in the process of that happening,

as a country we started to undervalue apprenticeships. You have to change the culture so public and private sector organisations are backing them. It's really important that we don't just improve the numbers, we protect the quality. If we don't do that we devalue the brand."

"We've said if you want to bring in a skilled worker from outside the European Union, you've got to provide apprenticeships. That's to ensure the opportunities are there for young people like the young people I've met today."

Mr Miliband on Friday took questions from students at Dudley College, which is building a £7m campus for engineering and manufacturing students.

College is designed for future needs of industries

By Charlie Benton

THIS is the first glimpse inside the brand new £7 million Dudley Advance campus, which will soon be welcoming engineering and manufacturing students.

Classrooms and workshops will feature computer aided design machines and a robotics suite will also be installed at the college site on Priory Road.

There will also be dedicated training rooms for pneumatics, hydraulics, welding and electronics spread over four floors. The first influx of students is expected in November. Construction work will soon be completed, although some landscaping work will continue into the new term.

Engineering

Some of Dudley College's existing engineering machinery is being moved from the college's Broadway site but it is also taking delivery of a range of industry-specific equipment, including 3D scanning and printing.

Although some of the work is still to be done, several of the classrooms and workshops have been carpeted and are waiting for equipment.

The cube-like building, clad in zinc and made to resemble a single block of machined steel, is currently surrounded by scaffolding to allow for the finishing touches by contractors Bowmer & Kirkland.

Inside the building the steel structure has been left exposed along with mechanical services and some wiring as a homage to the technology and technical skills used in its construction.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin, who went to school on the site when it was part of Castle High School, was given a tour by Dudley College principal Lowell Williams and Neil Thomas, director of the new campus, last week.

Mr Austin said: "I think the biggest question we face is how we help local businesses grow and bring new, well-paid and secure jobs to the Black Country to replace the ones we've lost. Long-term youth unemployment in the Black Country is twice the national average and we need to make edu-



MP Ian Austin with principal Lowell Williams, left, and director Neil Thomas

cation our number one priority because the only way we'll attract the new investment and jobs on which the area's prosperity depends is by having the skills new industries need.

"Under Lowell Williams, Dudley College has transformed our town centre and this brilliant new technology and manufacturing centre will soon be open, helping local businesses grow, educating young people and helping adults get new jobs too."

A resource centre, Dudley Enhance, is also under construction. It will house a lecture theatre which for up to 100 students as well as a maths workshop and a library and research centre. It will have a social area for students and will be home to the college's new bistro Stir, managed by the college to offer experience for catering and hospitality students.

The new campus also has an Innovation and Enterprise Zone, or business lounge, which local small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) can use.

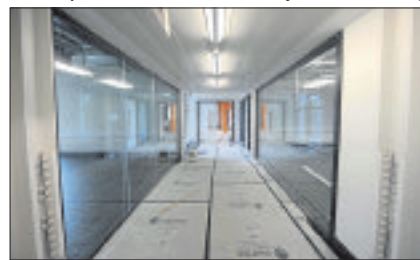
Partner

Neil Thomas, director at Dudley Advance, said: "SMEs are a huge part of local engineering in the area. We want to say to them they can come here and take advantage of the kit and space, and if they want to become a partner, give talks to students and possibly offer up placements, we won't even charge them for it."

The Advance and Enhance campuses are the newest additions to the Learning Quarter, which includes the sixth form building and Dudley Evolve vocational campus, which opened in September 2012 on the site of the former fire station in Tower Street.



Artist impression of the cube-like Dudley Advanced Building



Inside the new Centre for Advanced Manufacturing

Earlier this year the college became the first in the West Midlands to receive the prestigious award for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) from the New Engineering Foundation (NEF). The quality standard is recognised by the Government's Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, UK Commission for Employment & Skills and The National Apprenticeship Service.

NEF chief executive, Professor Sa'ad Medhat said: "Gaining the STEM Assured status signals to employers that Dudley College has strong and up to date STEM capability."

College principal Lowell Williams said "Gaining STEM Assured is an important achievement for us. These vitally important subjects will be integrated into the college's future plans and development."

Halloween Hocus Pocus at the zoo

DUDLEY Zoo is hosting a Halloween Hocus Pocus evening on October 31, offering close encounters with creepy crawlies.

Youngsters are invited to dress up in their spookiest costumes for the event, from 5pm to 8pm.

Snakes, spiders, cockroaches will be among the party goers and there will also be a ghost walk to discover what goes bump in the night at Dudley Castle.

Tickets are limited and are priced £8 with children under three free.

Call 0844 4742272 for details.

Burst leaves street without any water

A BURST water main in Dudley town centre left an entire street without water for several hours.

Dudley Magistrate's Court and the police station were among the buildings in Stone Street affected by the loss of water on Friday from 9am.

Spokeswoman for South Staffs Water Caroline Maddox said: "We managed to isolate the location of the burst and our engineers set to work immediately."

Supplies were restored by early afternoon.

Transport help for 10,000 job seekers

MORE than 10,000 job seekers have been given free travel to help them get back into work.

Centro revealed its WorkWise project, which provides free tickets for unemployed people travelling to interviews or starting jobs, had passed the landmark this week.

Centro has been working with JobCentrePlus in Birmingham, Coventry and the Black Country.

Cars and premises gutted in blaze

A CAR business in Lye was gutted in a severe fire, which left two people injured last week.

Fire chiefs said there was '100 per cent damage' to the inside of Hayes Car Centre, on The Hayes, in a blaze that also wrecked 11 cars in the building. One man suffered burns to his forehead and another smoke inhalation.

Rare production

A RARE performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's first operetta - Thespis - is being staged by Birmingham Savoyard at The Old Rep in Station Street, Birmingham, on October 25, 3pm. Call 0121 242 2791.

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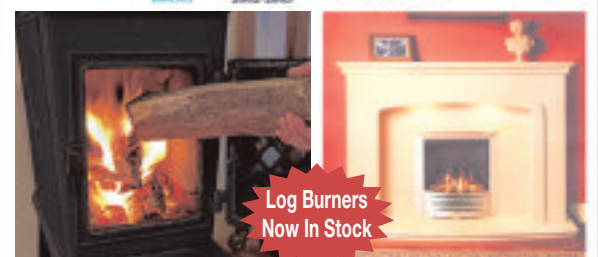
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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



IF screening for Ebola fever is introduced at British airports, will it fill you with confidence? If travellers' tales are to be believed, the current anti-terrorist screening procedure seems to specialise in picking on little old ladies from Worthing for full body scans, and waving through anyone in a burka. If the same people were in charge of Ebola screening, they would subject hale and hearty visitors from Finland to the full treatment while cheerfully opening the doors to sickly, feverish arrivals from Liberia. Political correctness could be the death of us.

ROSAMUND PIKE, star of *Gone Girl*, says some folk these days expect too much of marriage: "People have ridiculous expectations of a mate." How true. You have only to look at wedding photographs from 40 years ago to see how attitudes have changed. In the 1970s we lived under the shadow of the Bomb, so we tended to live for the moment. As far as I can recall, expectations had not been invented. If we had seriously thought about the future we would never have worn those lapels.

A READER takes me to task for referring to over-60s getting the winter fuel payment. In fact, to qualify for the coming winter's £200 you must have been born on or before July 5, 1952. The bad news is younger folk won't get the payment. The good news is that the bad news will probably make them very hot under the collar, thus saving on fuel.

BARRY Williams shot five people dead in a rampage in 1978. He was locked up in Broadmoor for 14 years until he was judged safe to be released under monitoring. He changed his name to Harry Street, moved to Birmingham, fell out with the neighbours, collected an arsenal of weapons and built a bomb. As you do. He was put back behind bars this week under the Mental Health Act. All of which raises a very obvious question. When the wild-eyed British jihadist trickle back from Syria and are jailed, will the decision to release them be made by the same sort of people who thought Barry Williams was no risk?

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Petitions calling for an end to geese cull

MORE than 4,000 people are calling for the end of a geese cull across Sandwell parks.

Figures from the authority show 220 Canadian geese have been culled in three instances over the past two years, costing £550 each time. The geese have been taken from Victoria Park in Tipton and Dartmouth Park in West Bromwich as it attempts to keep numbers under control.

Two petitions have been launched calling for an end to the practice. An online petition already has more than 2,500 names, with signatories from across the world, while a paper version locally has more than 1,500 names.

Organising the campaign, Ian Carroll, from Sandwell Swanwatch, said: "I'm concerned that with a click of a button they can wipe out this many birds' lives. It costs the voluntary sector a great deal of money to rehabilitate birds in Sandwell parks, so I find the cost to cull these geese scandalous."

"I don't believe that there was any justification for this cull at all, they haven't presented any evidence of damage to the parks yet. I don't accept they are a pest. What damage do they cause? They say they defecate on the grass but so does every bird in the park."

Mr Carroll said he intends to present the paper petition to a scrutiny panel at Sandwell Council next year, before any decisions on future culls.

He wants to challenge 'misconceptions' about the birds and promote non-le-

By Adam Grinsell

thal methods of controlling their numbers.

Sandwell Council previously said the cull was undertaken for health and safety and environmental reasons, after 'repeated complaints and real concerns' from park users, including parents of young children.

Environment boss Councillor Maria Crompton explained a review is expected. She said: "We've tried pricking and oiling goose eggs in the past to try to reduce numbers, and continue to do so, but we find this has little effect."

"With more than 1,000 geese grazing in our parks and a pair of geese rearing anything from four to eight goslings a season, the numbers had got out of control."

"The droppings contain bacteria and may be harmful if inadvertently swallowed."

Club on track for exhibition



Model railway enthusiasts get ready for the event

IT will be full steam ahead for railway model enthusiasts at an annual exhibition taking place this weekend.

Cradley Heath Model Railway Club is holding the event at Cradley Heath Community Centre, in Red-dal Hill Road, on Saturday.

Last year the event attracted more than 400 visitors and members hope it will prove just as popular this time around.

Layouts

There will be displays from clubs and individuals as well as stands selling models, books and items to help build layouts.

There will also be demonstrations of various modelling techniques and skills throughout the day.

Visitors will be able to watch the demonstrations to pick up tips for their own layouts.

The club has 23 members and meets three times a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. There is a junior section for 12 to 16-year-olds. The club has been running for 30 years.

For details call Frank Collins on (01384) 893881.

£2.8m is spent on staff from agencies

MORE than £2.8 million was spent by Dudley schools employing agency staff during six months.

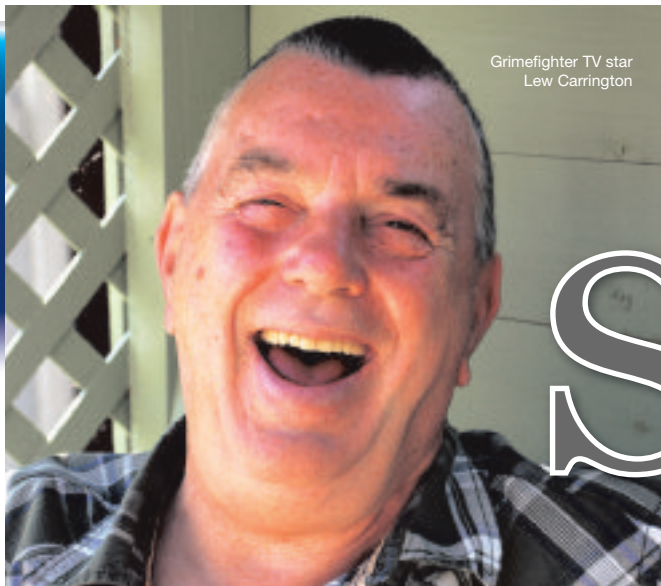
Casual workers are used to cover sickness absences and maternity leave to ensure pupils do not miss lessons. Some of the borough's schools spend money to bring in additional teaching specialists and coaches.

Figures for the borough show that a total of £2,820,335.21 was paid out between September last year and April this year.

Between January and April, schools spent £1,625,027.58. This was higher than the amount between September and December 2013 when the bill came to £1,195,307.63. The figures have been released by education bosses at Dudley Council under the Freedom of Information Act.

The amount per school during the six-month period ranged from £100 to £83,822. Schools are responsible for making their own staffing arrangements. Money is also often spent on bringing in staff to supervise exams as well as sports coaching, drama and music.

The figures exclude El-lowes, High Areal, Holly Hall, Kingswinford and Oldswinford Hospital, as they have their own financial systems. In Sandwell schools spent almost £5m in 12 months.



Grimefighter TV star
Lew Carrington

Come and meet our dentist Polly

As part of improvements for the patient experience at North Street a general dentistry practice works alongside the denture prescribing team.

"This one-stop service has always been the case, but people are still finding out about North Street Dental Clinic," said principal Steven Burchell DipCDT RCS(Eng) GDC108353. Dental surgeon Polly (GDC No 188090), a Doctor of Dental Medicine with a particular interest in restorative, cosmetic and paediatric fields, looks after the patients. She joined the

team in Dudley after working in Michigan at one of America's most prestigious cosmetic dental centres.

A dental plan practice, it offers everything from a simple filling to complex restorative procedures and implant dentistry. Initial consultations are complementary.

North Street
Dental Clinic



Star quality

Lew gets last laugh with failing teeth

LEWIS Carrington was born to be a star. A natural funnyman, he won the nation's hearts in the TV documentary *Grimefighters*. Known as Lew to his friends, he laughs easily as he recalls his brush with fame and as the unlikely adopted ambassador for the city of Wolverhampton.

Topping 1,500 members of his *Grimefighters* Fan Club on social networking website Facebook, Lew had his supporters clamouring for him to appear in the New Year's Honours list.

Still a well-known character on the city streets four years after sharing his unique take on life before the cameras, Lew is now enjoying retirement from his life of grime

and a cameo appearance on Harry Hill's *Get Toasted*.

But hidden beneath the smiles and priceless one-liners, the jovial comic genius was struggling with another often-comedic subject – dentures.

And indirectly, the former environmental waste operative owes his celebrity status to an ill-fitting set of them. "I could have retired from the council earlier, but wanted to save enough money to get my problem fixed," says Lew.

Wife Gill adds: "He'd seen the stories in the papers about how other people had their problems sorted out and had also done a lot of internet research."

Lew, aged 67, of Wednesfield, was cared for by Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng) GDC108353, principal at The Denture Clinic and Jonathon Pugh BDS MSc (Implant Dentistry) GDC 62663, principal of Total Implant Solutions in Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton.

Friendly staff

The two clinicians share a long-standing working relationship.

Says Lew: "I was using a bucket-load of fixative just to keep my teeth in. They'd be okay for half-an-hour and then they'd be dancing all over the place."

"My top denture wasn't too bad, but the lower moved all around with eating and laughing was risky. I'd had the trouble for years – every time I'd have a bit of tough steak, I was done for."

"I was a bit apprehensive, but I need not have been. I had two implants to stabilise my lower denture and I never felt a thing. I expected a lot of discomfort, but after a couple of days I was absolutely fine."

"Steve made me the over-dentures for the bottom and a new top set of teeth. They are absolutely great. Nothing was too much trouble for any of the friendly staff and going to see Steve was a pleasure."

"Going to the dentist had never been

so good and I am over the moon with the results."

On his star role in *Grimefighters*, Lew recalls: "There were some funny moments. We'd had a call to pick up a dead cat in Penfields. They said the animal was on the end of a drive. I looked everywhere and couldn't see it."

"There was a charity collection going on in the road where people had left clothing in bags for pick up. By the time I'd found out that the cat had been put into one of them, it had been collected by the charity and the van was disappearing down the road."

"Somebody was going to get a surprise," adds Lew with a wry smile.

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Council is recycling asphalt to save cash

THE Tarmac dug up when potholes are repaired is being recycled in an attempt to save Dudley Council cash.

The torn-up asphalt is being used on footpaths, parks and allotment areas in a move which could save the authority £36,000 every year that would otherwise be spent on new materials.

Around 800 tons of the material is now being re-used by the council each year, enough to cover two football pitches.

Dudley is now able to use recycled materials following a decision to use new machinery to carry out road repairs, as it pulls away the top level of road surfacing.

Transport boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "I am absolutely delighted with the savings we are creating by using this new machinery and I'm really pleased that we are able to use the recycled materials in such a positive way."

"I have been out with the crews to see the machinery in action and the speed and efficiency with which it does the job is very impressive."

The council has said the use of the recycled materials, which are taken back to the council's depot in Lister Road, is making a 'significant' saving.

The council has also estimated that £75,000 is already being saved due to the more efficient new machinery.

Officer says crime blitz is off to a 'fantastic start'

THE six-week crackdown on crime and anti-social behaviour in Sandwell has got off to a fantastic start, say police.

Safer 6 has been focusing on Rowley Regis and Tipton with police and council bosses aiming to tackle a range of issues.

Officers from the police and the council have been working together to target crime and nuisance behaviour.

So far the annual campaign has seen police execute a drugs warrant at a home in Whitehouse Street, Tividale, which led to a person being charged with possession of Class A and B drugs with intent to supply.

Offences

Police have also made two arrests for numerous bilking and driving offences, following an operation at a petrol station in Dudley Port. Officers checked 3,700 vehicles during automatic number plate recognition operations, seizing five.

Patrols were also carried out around Tividale and Burnt Tree primary schools aimed at reducing nuisance parking.

Council trading standards officers and police - aided by sniffer dogs Phoenix and Scamp from BWY Canine - seized around £38,000 of suspected counterfeit and smuggled tobacco from premises in West Bromwich. This included nearly 70,000 cigarettes and 17.4kg of

By Heather Large

hand-rolled tobacco. They also seized 30 bottles of suspected smuggled and counterfeit spirits from two shops in Tividale.

Council officers visited 58 empty private homes in Oldbury to check they were secure and council wardens seized alcohol 16 times, including four times from under-18s. They tackled anti-social behaviour, dealing with two truants in Barnford Park and began probes into eight abandoned vehicles.

Sergeant Gary Capewell, from Oldbury Neighbourhood Policing Team, said: "We have had a fantastic week of targeted action with a strong partnership approach. We have seen some really positive results which complements our ongoing fight against crime and anti-social behaviour."

The campaign, in its fifth year, runs to November 9.

Police plea to find missing teenagers



Missing — Beata Koguciuk



Missing — Jacob Butler

CONCERNS are growing for two missing teenagers from the Black Country.

Beata Koguciuk, aged 18, was last seen on September 27 when she left her home in Cradley Heath.

Jacob Butler, 14, was last seen on October 4 when he left his home in Rowley Regis, although there may have been a sighting of him since then in Kates Hill.

Polish

Beata is described as white, 5'10" tall with shoulder length red hair, green eyes and has a Polish accent. She was wearing a white jacket and blue jeans.

Jacob is described as white, slim build, 5'2" with short straight blonde hair.

He was wearing a blue Adidas tracksuit with a grey Adidas T-shirt.

His family have urged him to get in touch as soon as possible.

Anyone who has seen either teenager is asked to call police on 101.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Walkers' coffee stop fundraiser

WALKERS in Dudley stepped up for a charity challenge and raised hundreds of pounds.

Members of the Dudley Walkfit programme got behind Macmillan Cancer Support's coffee morning fundraiser by setting up coffee stops for walkers.

Members of the Huntingtree, Leasowes, Himley, Saltwells and Leasowes Nordic walking groups raised £479.

They each set up coffee stations in parks for people undertaking walks of between one-and-a-half and three hours during the Macmillan coffee morning week.

To find out about walking groups in Dudley's parks and open spaces, visit www.dudley.gov.uk/greenspacesforhealth

Man falls to death at landmark library

A MAN died after falling from the Library of Birmingham.

The man fell from an outside floor area of the library into Cambridge Street last Wednesday just before 7pm. He died at the scene. Police have said they are not treating his death as suspicious. His next of kin have been informed.

A spokesman for Birmingham City Council said: "We are saddened by the death of this man and our sympathies are with his family."

The iconic £187 million library opened just over a year ago and towers over Centenary Square.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

SOME of you may recall that a few weeks ago, I wrote about a mysterious company calling itself Access 2 Justice bugging me with unsolicited phone calls telling me I was entitled for compensation for injuries I did not receive in a car accident.

Despite my repeated pleadings that the only injury sustained in the collision was to the number plate, plus a bit of light bumper scuffing, the company, not to be confused with the reputable Access 2 Justice Foundation, has continued to bombard me with endless calls.

During the latest call from the elusive company, which does not have a website or any other visible means of contact, I asked if I could have an address so that I could write them a letter.

The caller, who up until that point had been charming personified, demanded to know why I would possibly want to know that, adding: "I hope you choke on your tea." Clearly nice people to do business with.

IN A 'searingly honest' interview with a red top – and by searingly honest, I of course mean attention-seeking – former soap actress Helen Flanagan declared: "I'm a very private person, but I want to be the next Kelly Brook."

Hmm. Would this be the same Helen Flanagan who took to the internet to show off her newly-enhanced assets? Or who had to endure a terrifying raid at her home after taking to Twitter to tell anyone who would listen that she was home alone? Apparently so. Indeed, even the interview in question was accompanied by two pages of pictures showing her in various states of undress.

One hates to think what this 'very private' person will do if she ever overcomes her shyness.

AT last, something to look forward to on television. The Apprentice is back.

Forget the boring bakers, simpering singers, and dreary dancers, people love The Apprentice because it is actually about real life. Of course, the TV bods can't resist trying to manipulate things, deliberately choosing boastful, confrontational candidates who will rub each other up the wrong way. But essentially it is about getting on with the sort of activities we can all relate to, without any 'journeys', 'emotional rollercoasters', tinkly piano music or crying bloopers.

However, it is interesting to note that, despite having a record 20 candidates this year, the series is scheduled to run for just 14 episodes. So call me a cynic, but I would hazard a guess that there will be at least one occasion over the coming months where the lovely Lord Sugar loses his rag and spontaneously fires several candidates.

Not that I am suggesting it is stage managed in any way, you understand.



Private George Hinton, served in Egypt and India



Corporal Timothy Hinton was killed in battle in 1917



Private Joseph Hinton, one of four brothers who served

Family's pride over fearless war hero

JON PRITCHARD looks at an exhibition in Dudley about local men who went to fight in the Great War

HE CONTINUED bravely fighting while his comrades were wounded, firing his gun at the oncoming German army.

Corporal Timothy Hinton fell in battle in 1917, but not until after he had made history.

It is believed that he was the first man from Dudley to arrive in France in the First World War.

And now pictures and documents from his time on the front line are part of a major exhibition in the town commemorating the 100th anniversary of the conflict.

His death, a commanding officer, would report, was 'noble' in the service of his country and he 'knew no fear'.

Mons

Corporal Hinton was with the Royal Welch Fusiliers – the archaic spelling of Welsh reflecting its status as one of the oldest regiments – for up to five years before leaving the Army and signing up as a reserve.

He was then called up in April 1914, again with the Royal Welch Fusiliers, who were one of the first regiments to go to France to fight.

On February 24, 1916, Cpl Hinton was transferred to the newly-formed Machine Gun Corps, something his experience with the Fusiliers, with whom he fired the machine guns, would have assisted.

After doing his bit in battles at Mons, Marne, Aisne, Le Cateau, and Le Scarpe, he suffered a head wound on April 16, 1917, and was taken to a hospital in Le Havre, where he died on May 23.

His family later received his Distinguished



Janet Chilton looks at newspaper cuttings about her great-uncles

guished Conduct Medal, and his great-niece, Janet Chilton, has donated items to help tell his story at an exhibition in Dudley on local soldiers who served in the Great War.

The exhibition tells the story of Cpl Hinton's life and death as was reported in newspapers shortly after his death, as well as his three brothers.

The family had lived in The Mambles, on King Street in Dudley, before they went off to fight to serve their country.

Cpl Hinton was one of 15 children born, but Mrs Hinton said that six of

them had died after only a matter of months each.

Timothy, who was 30 at the time of his death, had three younger brothers also fighting in the war, Privates George, Joseph and Ebenezer Hinton.

George Hinton served in Egypt, India and in The Dardanelles, while Joseph served in France. Ebenezer Hinton served with the Sherwood Foresters.

Another Hinton brother, Edward, tried to join the armed forces but was refused on account of him having a reserved occupation.

Mrs Chilton said: "My sister gave my uncle the medal and it wasn't until he died that I researched into what had happened. He enlisted in Birmingham and is now buried in St Marie Cemetery in Le Havre. "When I saw in the paper that there was going to be this exhibition I brought all the information I have in to the museum."

Adrian Durkin, an exhibition officer at the museum, has since helped her research the background of her great-uncle, and he believes he was one of the first people from the area to reach France during the war.

Mr Durkin said: "From looking at the history of the Royal Welch Fusiliers you can see that they were there so he would have been one of the first, if not the first, people from Dudley to go over to France."

"It's hard to trace the records of people who lived because their records were bombed during the Second World War and they were destroyed."

Corporal Hinton was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his efforts during the war, which was sent to his family after his death. His citation said: "When two of his men had been wounded, he continued to fire the gun alone. Throughout the day he displayed initiative and great gallantry."

Around 12 years ago, Mrs Chilton and her mother, Doris Russon, visited the grave of her great-uncle, in Le Havre with two of their close friends, John and Sheila Shipway.

She said: "It was very emotional when we went to France, more so for my mother. She never met him but we are all very proud of what he did."

The exhibition is full of information and possessions of people from the Black Country and surrounding area, paying tribute to their efforts.

Mrs Chilton added: "When I was researching Timothy I went to the Dudley archive. I couldn't believe how many soldiers had died from Dudley in the war."

The exhibition is at Dudley Museum and Art Gallery until November 2018.

WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

NEITHER Labour or the Tories want to approach the next election thinking about a coalition. The problem is, with the opinion polls still so close after the party conference season, they don't really have a choice.

The Conservatives finally got themselves a lead for the first time in two years. But it's hardly a done deal. For all their attempts to portray Ed Miliband as another Michael Foot, his conference speech was not the second longest suicide note in history.

He forgot to mention the economy and immigration, and that's bad. Even so, what the Tories gained was a lead of only a couple of points, despite their own policies and announcements being generally well received.

David Winnick has been an MP for a very long time. The member for Walsall North wants his party colleagues to put out of their minds any prospect of having to cosy up to anyone else "We have to work all out for a working majority and any question of coalition with the Liberal Democrats or anyone else does not arise now," he says.

But the question has arisen now as it did four years ago. Some people who voted Liberal Democrat might have done so believing there was a chance they would form a coalition with one of the others. Many didn't. Now the party's dwindling number of supporters are left in no doubt that Nick Clegg is trying to stay in government with one or other of the two bigger parties. Neither did Conservative voters put their X in the box expecting to have a party they didn't back taking some of the key roles.

The next election will see the parties have to campaign against each other but not do so with such bad blood left between them that they burn their bridges. So it is an important and perfectly reasonable set of questions for voters to be asking of their MPs and candidates: Who could you work with?

Have party leaders on both sides of the Atlantic painted themselves into a corner when it comes to tackling Islamic State?

Wolverhampton South East MP Pat McFadden questions what may happen by ruling out 'boots on the ground'.

He wrote: "Is war weariness pushing the West back into an unwitting adoption of the Vietnam doctrine of escalation by degree rather than using overwhelming force which replaced it? For our leaders haunted by the recent experience of Iraq and Afghanistan it is worth remembering, the past did not begin in 2003."

The difficulty is it's not that long since British forces left Iraq. And they're only now leaving Afghanistan after 13 troubled years. It doesn't make it right to hold off on saving people from modern-day barbarians. But it does make it all the more difficult to take the country with you.

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Memories of colourful character Harry

IT is with great sadness that we have heard of the death on September 25, in Australia, of former Walsall Councillor Harry Richards at the age of 93. Harry was born in Bloxwich in 1921, the sixth of 14 children.

Harry was very well known. A canny and colourful election agent, always a smile on his face and a joke to tell, his loud and gravelly voice and those white 'mutton chops' sideburns made him very distinctive.

Harry served on Walsall County Borough Council from 1953 to 1956 (Birchills ward) and again from 1958 to 1959 (Bloxwich

ward). Later he served on the West Midlands County Council and again on Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council from 1980 to 1986 (Pleck ward).

There is a clock which takes pride of place on the mantelpiece of the Ante-Room to the Mayor's Parlour that he presented to the Mayor upon a visit back to the UK in 1997. I have no doubt that tributes will be paid to him at the next sitting of Walsall Council on Monday November 17 at 6pm.

COUNCILLOR PETE SMITH
Mayor of Walsall

EU runs our energy policy now

BE in no doubt that it's the European Union that runs Great Britain now.

Why are we risking the possibility of our lights going out by closing down perfectly good coal power stations just to satisfy the EU's carbon emission targets? Whilst at the same time the EU have graciously granted Great Britain the 'final approval' to allow the French to build a £24 billion nuclear power station in beautiful Somerset that could take 20 years to build.

That £24 billion plus the billions saved by scrapping HS2 could be pumped in building hydro electric stations that, unlike nuclear stations, are the real low carbon energy producers and cheaper to run once constructed.

Make no doubt that the EU is now in full control of our energy generating policy but it won't be the French or Belgians sitting in the dark.

G E FANTHOM
Swindon

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

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Plenty of places to build new housing

THERE is a lot of talk on the radio, TV and the press about the need for more 'social housing'.

Who for? If this is for 'immigrants', why not convert Cavendish House? It has stood as a blot on the landscape for too long. Use it.

Travelling around the West Midlands, as we do, we have seen lots of empty houses.

In Dudley alone we have seen several developments that have been partially built and just left. Why?

If a developer wants to build houses, do they not require permission?

If so, why doesn't the council insist that they prove that there is sufficient money in their accounts to complete what they propose to start.

On the corner of Bryce Road, Commonsode and Pensnett Road junction, there is what looks like a 'jail'.

Apparently it was supposed to have been a home for the elderly but it is just an eyesore.

Why do the council not try to find someone to complete what was started, or have it knocked down and something else built in its place?

In other parts of the borough, there are jobs that were started and just left.

We see lots of vacant plots that could be built on.

If the need for housing is so great, why aren't they used?

P COLE
Kingswinford

Armistice at Menin Gate

HAS any reader ever considered attending the Armistice Service at Ypres in Belgium where the Menin Gate stands? Battlefield Memorial Tours is a voluntary organisation continuing the work of the late Alex Bull-och MBE, with a three-day, two-night trip to France and Belgium on 10 to 12 November.

As well as the visit to Ypres and the service on November 11, we are also visiting La Coupole where a brilliant museum now stands. This was once the intended site of a V2 rocket launch facility that was rendered unusable by Barnes Wallis' Tallboy bombs.

Pick-ups are available from Walsall and Birmingham International Station. The total cost is £255, please visit www.battlefieldmemorialtours.co.uk or contact Brian Long 01629 650780.

T KNIGHT
Solihull

Please sort out subway flood

ONCE again Worcester Street subway has flooded after rain. The drainage implemented is not fit for purpose.

This has been going on for several years now and leaves a horrible stinking mess to be cleared up every time.

Engineers I have spoken to say the drainage is adequate but they wouldn't think that if they used the subway to shop daily as I do and get confronted by a wall of water at times.

Please will someone sort this problem as it is a health hazard.

M MCPHEE
Stourbridge

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Word is Seth's in for a busy time

WITH a gruelling album tour started new father of twins Seth Lakeman finds time to talk to **DANNY FARRAGHER**

THERE is an urban myth that men can't multi-task.

Well word of mouth is one of the most in-demand musicians around at the moment, Seth Lakeman, blows that ideology out of the water.

New father of twins, studio producer, multi-instrumentalist, singer/songwriter and member of his own band and the award-winning collective, The Full English, is half way through a 14-date UK tour promoting his latest album and wowing audiences with his incredible passion for music. Not a bad tally for a man.

And as Lakeman talks before the beginning of the tour he has an upbeat tone to his voice, not unlike an excited child about to set off on holiday rather than a musician starting a gruelling nationwide journey which sees him play to a sold out show at Town Hall, Birmingham tonight and as part of The Full English at Warwick Arts Centre later this month.

Juggle

"We are looking forward to the tour and there are other things coming in, which is great. It's important to keep yourself busy. There is a lot to juggle at the moment."

Lakeman and his wife Hannah, who has recently returned from maternity leave to her job as a nurse, were married in 2012.

Just over a year ago they became proud parents of twins, a boy and a girl, and of course this has changed the dynamics of the Lakeman lifestyle.



Virtuoso fiddle player Seth Lakeman who is playing a sold out show in

"It gets complicated. I suppose for years I was very much plying a professional furrow, working and that was what I loved, but when life changes and you've got home to think about and be there, it becomes very complex.

"I am just trying to be back home as much as possible. It's just keeping that balance which is important."

The album, released in February, has done something folk albums, traditionally, are not supposed to do – crossed over and been lauded in the mainstream pop world which has come as something of a surprise to the performer from Buckland Monachorum, West Devon. "Word of Mouth has been

received very well, much better than I could have expected. People have got the concept behind it, and people who are not particularly into folk seem to be getting it too.

"It was a big experiment for me."

Friday will be one of the many times Lakeman has played in the Midlands and he feels he always gets a good reception here.

"We always do really well in the Midlands; the Town Hall is sold out. It's a great one for us to come to, it's an amazing venue, it really is gorgeous."

Seth Lakeman also appears with The Full English on October 31 at Warwick Arts Centre.

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Memories flood back before church closure

IT'S just days away from hosting its final service and so a community has been saying farewell to its church before it shuts its door for good.

St Luke's Church in Cradley Heath will close after almost 170 years of worship due to escalating repair costs of around £750,000.

The congregation will move to St John's Church, Dudley Wood, after a final service this Sunday.

To mark the closure of the church, which has been open since 1847, an open day was held allowing members of the community and congregation a chance to take a walk down memory lane.

Hundreds of people walked through the doors to see the church, as well as old photographs which were on display. Some of the historical registers were also available to view.

Mavis Pearson, aged 83 and from Sutherland Road in the town, was one of those to visit the church at the event.

She was married in St Luke's 61 years ago, to husband George on September 19, 1953. All three of her children had also been christened there.

The widowed great-grandmother-of-four said: "We always relied on the church for the big events."

"Our wedding day was lovely, we were both from Cradley Heath so it was our parish church."

"I took a picture by the altar where I got married — 61 years ago I was kneeling in that spot," she said.

"They had a book down there on the day with the children's christenings written in."

The congregation at the church will be moving to St John's in Dudley Wood, with the final service at St Luke's involving a procession to their



Mavis Pearson, 83, wed at St Luke's



Mavis and George on their wedding day



St Luke's Church in Cradley Heath — Bishop leads last service on Sunday

new home for the service to be completed.

Churchwarden and lay minister Val Cope was baptised, confirmed and married at St Luke's, and her children were also baptised and married there.

She said: "It's a new beginning, we are going from the old to the new. The people at St John's have made the congregation here very welcome at joint

services, so we are looking forward to being part of that church."

"It's been a pleasure to be at St Luke's, the memories are fantastic."

The church's presence on the High Street will remain in the form of Cradley Heath Community Link.

The Bishop of Dudley, the Right Rev Graham Usher, will lead the final act of worship at 10.30am on Sunday.

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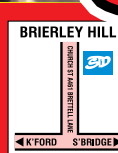
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Going bake in time at the living museum



Museum baker Carol Johnson kneading the dough ready for new baking displays at the Black Country Living Museum

WITH The Great British Bake Off helping to reignite the nation's love of baking, the Black Country Living Museum is showing how it was done in days gone by.

Every day bread is baked in the coal fired cast-iron oven with visitors given the chance to watch the baker at work. There is no high-tech machinery or fancy gadget to make it easier just pure elbow grease.

The demonstrations, carried out by costumed guides, show how this staple

of the diet was made and prove popular with visitors.

Abby Bird, of the museum, said: "Bread was an essential component of the working class diet during the 19th century, with a much larger proportion of wages spent on loaves than today."

"Our on-site bakery allows visitors to see the process of how it was made from start to finish, using nothing but coal-fired ovens and a lot of elbow grease - just as it would have been."

The coal-fired bakery from Oldbury is representative of the small independent bakeries once an important

part of every town during the Victorian and early 20th century eras.

In Wednesbury alone there were 31 bake houses in the 1920s. The museum's bakery, which dates back to around 1844, continued in business until 1952 when last baker Samuel Harvey retired. After that the premises were used for storage. When the museum rescued the building in 1977 it was entirely derelict with virtually no roof remaining.

It was carefully rebuilt brick-by-brick at the museum and the interior completed with fittings from Clarke's bakery in Mount Pleasant, Bilston.

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New boss for wildlife group

A NEW boss has been appointed at the Black Country major wildlife charity. Georgia Stokes has joined Birmingham and the Black Country Wildlife Trust as its new chief executive. She joins from Northfield Eccentre in Birmingham, where she has worked for the past six years. She said: "The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is a brilliant organisation with a track record in delivering projects to benefit local wildlife that is unrivalled. I cannot wait to get started. There is a lot of work to do to ensure that we build on the superb achievements of the last few years."

Nick Hammond, the trust's acting chief executive, said: "I feel very happy to be handing over to Georgia. She has all the skills needed to build on the very good foundation here. There are some exciting possibilities for enhancing green spaces and nature in Birmingham and the Black Country."

The trust has 10,000 members.

Campaigners support bid by councils to run the railways

RAIL campaigners have backed plans by councils to take over the management of train services.

Proposals, put together by 14 local authorities are intended to give them a greater say over the next franchise and the ability to set fares.

The councils will work under the name West Midlands Rail. The body brings together Wolverhampton, Walsall, Sandwell, Dudley, Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull, who all fund transport authority Centro, as well as Staffordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Northamptonshire councils.

West Midlands Rail has submitted a case to the Department for Transport (DfT) to take over

the management of local services to Birmingham from 2017, with the franchise being awarded by the DfT and operated by a private company. Services are currently operated by London Midland.

Ian Jenkins, from Campaign for Rail, said the case for devolution is 'strong'.

Better

He said: "Services on Merseyside, in Scotland and in London are managed by devolved bodies, and are of better quality than those provided at present in the West Midlands."

"Local rail passengers want to see improvements to their services and better value for money. The performance of London Midland has continued to be appalling with frequent cancellations owing to staff shortages due to their poor planning and management, and the DfT has not taken action."

"Regional rail services are better managed locally than by DfT. We would hope West Midlands Rail would ensure the better delivery of services that passengers rely on for work and leisure — and will take swifter action if the franchisee does not keep their promises than the mandarins in Whitehall."

A business case has been sent to DfT for consideration and it is understood that a decision will be made by the Secretary of State before the end of the year with the franchising process beginning in 2015.

London Midland has said it supports the idea of devolution.

Hair salon to help charity

STAFF and customers at a Kingswinford hair salon will be tickled pink for charity as part of a charity fundraiser.

Mojo's hair salon, in Cross Street, will host two days of pink-themed fun to help raise money for breast cancer awareness.

On October 24 and 25, staff will don pink wigs and clothes while customers will be treated to a glass of pink fizz and cakes. Customers can also win a free cut and blow dry, beauty products and more.

Salon owner and stylist Jo Prosser, who opened Mojo's nine years ago, said: "We're really looking forward to having some fun in the salon pampering our customers while helping to raise money for such a good cause. It's a charity that is very close to my heart as my aunt was diagnosed with breast cancer last year. Thankfully she now has the all-clear."

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Undersea world inspires body art



Liesl Despy, of Selly Oak, models at the body art convention

IT'S face painting but on a far grander scale. Body artists and enthusiasts from across the world descended on the Black Country for a convention showcasing their talents.

Models were painted from head to toe in colourful, eye-catching and thought-provoking designs all inspired by the sea.

Hundreds of people turned out to the event, which is the largest of its kind in the UK, at the Copthorne Hotel in Brierley Hill.

Artists and enthusiasts travelled from America, Norway and Italy to take part. From paint pallets to prosthetic fins and sea-shells — an array of designs were brought to life in demonstrations. Many had come to see American Dutch artist Biary, who is based in Seattle and has made a name for himself in the industry.

It can take up to eight hours for the designs to come to life as they are carefully painted on to the models.

The UK Face and Body Art Convention was created by Rosemary Watson, who established face painting company Rainbow Faces in Shropshire 20 years ago.

Rural roads riskier than the motorways

SEVENTY two drivers in the West Midlands were killed on country roads and almost 500 were seriously injured over a year, new figures reveal.

A campaign has been launched to get people to slow down on country roads as statistics show they are 11 times more likely to be killed on rural lanes than on motorways.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has revealed a third of West Midlands drivers have had a near miss or collision on a country road with 72 fatalities and 486 serious injuries on rural roads in a year.

The DfT's Think! campaign said 60 per cent of people killed on Britain's roads die on rural roads and new research shows many more drivers are putting themselves at risk of an accident.

More than a third, 37 per cent, have been surprised by an unexpected hazard, such as an animal in the road. Two fifths also confess to taking a bend too fast.

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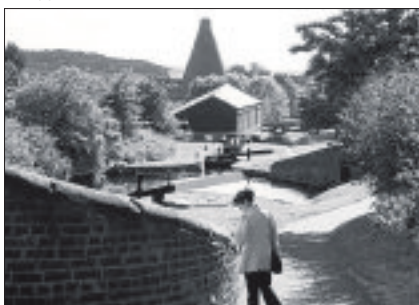
The glass industry was linked to canals



Birchills Power Station near the canal



Caggy Stevens of Tipton, one of the last to horseboat



Stourbridge canal looking down to the glass kiln cone

Secret history of waterways is brought to life by canals expert

AS the industrial revolution took hold in the 18th century, canals spawned a radical new transport that became the arteries of the national economy.

Now, hundreds of years later, after being rescued from decline and neglect, the region's network is experiencing a rejuvenation as a place of leisure and recreation.

In his new book called *Waterways of the West Midlands*, Robert Davies, formerly of Tipton, delves into the unexplored history surrounding the great West Midlands canal network.

Through interviews with some of the last great boatmen, he reveals a new insight into its fascinating history including intriguing places and people. The 60-year-old's interest in the inland waterways was first sparked 20 years ago when, after being off work ill, he learned about the early years of the canals from a friend.

Growing up in Tipton, he says he 'could

MEMORY LANE

Report by Rob Gollidge

not miss' the canals and had always been a familiar element of life in the Black Country. "The West Midlands has made and continues to make a huge contribution to the story of the inland waterways of Great Britain," he said.

"Yes, the Birmingham Canal Navigations (BCN) has lost some of its original waterways, and that is a sad fact, but it is still an amazing place to visit, and its history is rich and varied.

"Add that to the other great associated waterways - the Staffordshire and Worcestershire; the Worcester and Birmingham; the Trent and Mersey; and of course, the River Severn, and you have enough waterways to spend a lifetime exploring."

The book starts off looking at the Stourport and its origin as a canal town. "Stourport is my first choice because, in 1772, that is where James Brindley placed the termi-

nus of his Staffordshire and Worcestershire (S&W) Canal; and what a treasure that town has been for more than 200 years," he said.

Mr Davies also looks at some canal pioneers as he traces the reasons for their creation. "Historical figures are an essential part of this book, and such noteworthies as Boulton and Watt, John Corbett, and Josiah Wedgwood add to the tale of how the canals came to be and how useful they were to the 18th and 19th-century industrialists and entrepreneurs," he said.

"Of course, contrasted with these worthies are the ordinary working boatmen, and I have been fortunate to be able to get the life stories of two to add to our understanding of the last few decades of the industrial canal.

"At a horseboating demonstration at a recent boating rally, a young lady volunteer was heard to say, 'That doesn't look safe. I don't think the canals were designed for horses', prompting older ones to quickly put her right: that indeed the canals, and especially the towpath were designed for

horses, just as much as they were made for narrowboats."

Mr Davies estimates that around 15,000 horses, mules or donkeys were pulling boats on the canals during their heyday.

The book looks at the links between the Stourbridge canal and the glass industry, as well as the industry on the Walsall canals where a man named Jack Haddock captured some of its last working days in photograph.

In the book, Mr Haddock explains: "My first recollections of Walsall were of a view from the balcony of a Corporation tramcar, as it rose over the steep hump of narrow canal bridge en route to Bloxwich. As you approached the bridge, there was the majestic sight of Pratt's Flour Mill with its imposing height and numerous small windows covered in flour dust."

Mr Davies describes himself as a part-time author and full-time canal enthusiast. This is his fourth book published by The History Press, his previous including *Boats, Smoke, Steam and Folk* and *Midlands Canal Carriers*. The book is £14.99.

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Digging into the past to uncover glass heritage

IT has taken eight months of hard toil, involving expert archaeologists, more than 100 volunteers and scores of schoolchildren delicately sifting through tons of soil, to unearth hidden gems in Stourbridge

At the end of the excavation at the site of the Stourbridge Glasshouse College, two of the earliest glass-making furnaces ever discovered in the region were revealed.

The furnaces, which have been hidden for more than 300 years on the Coalbourn Hill and Coalbourn Brook sites, were unearthed as part of a large-scale redevelopment. The latest phase involves the construction of a new car park.

The furnaces are in the shape of distinctive cones and date back to 1691 and 1692 respectively, and have been resurrected along with an array of artefacts including window

glass, bottles, tiles, cut lead crystal and carriage lantern lenses.

The site forms part of The Glasshouse, more formally known as the Ruskin Glass Centre, which serves as a working homage to glass. Stourbridge was once the epicentre of the UK's glass-making industry, renowned the world over for its high-quality glass products since the early 1600s.

Ian Dury, who runs Stourbridge Glass Engravers, based at Ruskin Glass Centre, and has been involved in the trade for 46 years, hailed the latest discoveries as a 'time-capsule of British glass making'. He said: "I really can't stress enough the importance of these findings. Stourbridge has a long-standing reputation for producing glass. Anything you could ever think of making out of glass was produced here"



Cassie Jones with a glass bottle found at the excavation being held at Stourbridge Glasshouse College

Target is reached for canal showcase

DUDLEY Canal Trust has secured the final funding it needs towards a new £3 million education and heritage centre, paving the way for work to start.

The Portal will be used to tell the tens of thousands of visitors who go to the site every year about the Black Country's industrial past and its canal heritage.

The project has now been awarded £500,000 by Biffa Award as their flagship project for this year. The two-storey base will be built by the Dudley Canal Tunnel entrance at Todd's End.

A swing bridge would be constructed to enable visitors from the Black Country Living Museum, on the opposite side of the canal, to access the ticket office, boats and heritage centre. Bosses also plan to install a lift to enable people to get to and from the towpath and visitor embarkation wharf.

Heritage activities officer Sarah Fellows said a contractor was due to be appointed.

She added: "The Biffa Award marks the last major grant contribution to the Portal building. Now that is in place, the construction can start very soon on site."

Firm told to pay up now appeal is dropped

THE company behind a proposed waste plant at Brierley Hill is facing paying costs after ditching the original scheme before a planning inquiry.

Dudley Council and campaign group Say No To Waste – SNOW – have been invited by The Planning Inspectorate to make an application for 'wasted and unnecessary expense' over the Clean Power appeal.

The inquiry was due to take place in June after the company appealed against the council's decision to refuse its planning application for the waste to energy plant off Moor Street in Brierley Hill. But the company abandoned the appeal just a month before it was due, in favour of submitting a new application with added 'air lock' odour controls to address fears over smells.

SNOW has submitted a claim for just under £1,000, while Dudley Council is in negotiations over its claim.

In a letter to SNOW, Ken McEntee, from The Planning Inspectorate, said: "In this case the appeal was withdrawn some three months after it was submitted. The appellants' decision to withdraw the appeal when they did needed to be weighed against the risk of an award of costs. This risk was brought to the appellants' attention.

He said the company should have been aware that their actions caused Brierley Hill SNOW campaign to incur 'wasted or unnecessary expense' in preparing to resist it at the abortive inquiry and 'an award of costs will be made accordingly'.

By Alex Ross

Mr McEntee said that a partial award of costs should be made for expenses incurred from March 21 and the award was on the grounds of 'unreasonable' behaviour.

SNOW spokesman Tim Lee said if the costs could not be agreed with the firm, SNOW would consider applying to the High Court. He said the group's claim was for £985.75.

He added: "It is clear that the appellants were warned at the outset by the Planning Inspectorate that if they were to withdraw their appeal without good reason, then they risked a costs order being made. The costs recovered will go into SNOW's fighting fund against Clean Power's new planning application, which is ongoing."

The planning inspectorate has ordered that the council is entitled to a partial award of costs incurred. The amount of is now a matter for negotiation with Clean Power.

A new planning application was submitted by Clean Power last month.

Rent cut offer for traders hit by delay

TRADERS will be able to move onto new stalls at Dudley's revamped market place in the new year.

Work on a £6 million transformation of Dudley Market is taking place. Stallholders were temporarily moved in June from their traditional home in the High Street to the other side of the town centre fountain.

It had been hoped they would be able to move back by the end of this month but, due to delays, the date has been pushed back to the new year.

Dudley Council has agreed to offer the traders a 20 per cent reduction in their rent after they reported a continued drop in customers since the project began.

The latest reduction, which runs until late December, comes on top of a 30 per cent cut agreed in April.

Len Lenihan, chairman of Dudley Market Traders Association, said traders 'appreciated' the offer from the council.

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Now the Pensnett-based company is applying its know-how and creative flair to kitchens, which can now be viewed in its extensive Bradley Street showroom.

Owner David Spinks said: "Moving into kitchens is an exciting development for us and our customers will receive exactly the same levels of service and expertise.

We're proud to say that 85 per cent of our business comes from recommendations and we're looking forward to showing existing and potential customers around our impressive new displays.

Manager Andrew Fuller and his friendly sales team Kate, Malcolm, Samantha and Shannon are happy to talk visitors through the wide range of products and accessories available, including a selection of doors, worktops and smart storage and appliance options, and arrange home visits.

Sitting alongside the fitted kitchens is one of the largest bathroom displays in the area featuring modern designer, contemporary and traditional styles.

Summerhill Bathrooms supplies the biggest and best names in the business including Ideal Standard, Armitage Shanks, Grohe, Mira and Triton plus Utopia bathroom furniture manufactured in the Black Country.

Bathroom furniture in a dazzling array of door colours, shower enclosures and accessories and corian and marble worktops are also available.

David said: "Customers are greeted by our friendly staff and, if they wish, they can take along a sketch of their bathroom so we can come up with some immediate ideas before producing a CAD design.

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"It's even better in case it rains". Why? "We can play outside in the rain."

"I like the slide because you can go down it." This year we have enjoyed a very smooth transition into reception and the children have settled in well concerning the rules and routines. They are already beginning to gain independence in some of the activities that they take part in. We love to develop our partnership with parents and have provided them with opportunities to join us for stay and play sessions and a phonics workshop. Soon we will be launching Tapestry, where parents can access their children's learning journeys online from their home.

Some of the parents have said: "It was nice to see him interacting with other children and the staff. I also liked seeing what work he did." "The development is rapid and the sessions we have had have been detailed and fun. I also feel the behaviour initiatives are working well and encouraging my child to do the right thing. My child is excited about learning." The reception team would like to thank the parents for all of their support and we cannot wait to see all that the children achieve throughout this year.

The start of a new school year is an exciting time for everyone. This is especially true for this year's reception children at Colley Lane as they have access to a new outdoor all-weather playground and classroom.



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'Hello Reception'



Reception children at Olive Hill Primary School have had a stunning start to their school year with the topic, 'Here I am'. Links were made across the curriculum through Goldilocks and The Three Bears motivating the children to make 'Wanted' posters, write letters, program technological gadgets and get stuck into maths games, drama and dance. The children made a smooth transition from the school nursery and other settings into small Key Worker groups in the bright and airy, purpose-built classrooms. The new extended outdoor learning environment including Trim Trail, Mud Kitchen and gardening patch has proven very popular! Parents and carers have already had a range of opportunities to join in with their child at school including a Reading Workshop, an Eid Party, local library visits and Drop-in Sessions. Following Reception and Year 6 successes last year, we look forward to working closely with the families to continue to ensure we learn together to achieve success.



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We know that starting school is such an important time in your child's life, so we want to make it as fun and memorable as possible. The days are filled with exciting activities inspired by the children and their interests. Already this year we have made scarecrow pancakes, created magical potions and we even have a class R cinema experience planned!

We believe in keeping our learning current and based around the curiosities of the children. Each day is different and we provide the children with a variety of opportunities, which enable them to question and progress in all areas of their learning both indoors and out.

We are always planning new and exciting activities which enable the children to

access learning in a mixture of ways. Last year we had some fantastic activities ranging from, estimating who could collect the most snow from the snow machine at Christmas, to who could throw the most water bombs in a minute in the summer! Such hands on experiences provide us with fantastic observation opportunities and give the children the chance to learn through play!

As a school we are always happy for you to pop in and experience Class R for yourself - so please come along to one of our open days or contact the office for an alternative date.

We look forward to welcoming you to Manor Way.



Unusual cave location for duo's new garden business

TWO friends have turned their love of gardening into a business by starting up their own nursery in a unique location near Stourbridge.

Sandstone caves create an atmospheric backdrop for Prestwood Cave Nursery off the A449.

Friends Lisa Carroll, from Sedgley, and Sue Brown, of Lower Gornal, have taken over the two acre site at Prestwood.

Spooky

It sits among sandstone caves which will be used for themed exhibitions with spooky Halloween displays already in place.

Sue said: "The caves are a real feature for the nursery.

"We are both keen gardeners and have always dreamed of doing something like this."

A small pets corner featuring rab-

bits, chickens and guinea pigs has been set up.

The pair have a range of ideas for the future of their business, which currently includes three large greenhouses on site off the A449.

One will be full of plants while the others form preparation areas.

Themed Christmas gifts are already being prepared following a successful festive season last year when the friends sold their goods at car boot sales in the area.

Bedding plants and shrubs are already proving popular with customers but the friends also hope to be able to create a number of allotments of an unused part of the site, which would be available for individuals to rent.



Business partners Lisa Carroll, left, and Sue Brown are pictured at the Prestwood Cave Nursery

Children can get crafty at centre

A FREE art club has been launched thanks to a partnership between a shopping centre and charity art group.

Artspace will be hosting the drop-in sessions every second Saturday of the month at the Churchill Shopping Centre in Dudley after London & Cambridge Properties, which owns and manages the venue, agreed to provide funding.

The first session held last month attracted 40 children.

Puppet

The art club is held outside the Iceland store, Ed Cartwright, of Artspace Dudley, which also occupies a unit at the shopping centre, said: "It's always great fun to see children get stuck into their arts and crafts and we hope that as we hold more art sessions in the shopping centre in the coming months, we'll see lots of youngsters taking part."

The November 8 art session is puppet making, while December 13 will be about Christmas card making day.

Sessions run from 11am to 2pm and are on a drop-in bases. See www.artspacedudley.com website.

'Vital' hub for mental health is reprieved

A DROP-IN centre has been given a 12 month stay of execution after campaigners fought to keep it open, saying its services were vital.

Dove House in Dudley helps provide support and advice sessions for people with mental health conditions. It is based on the grounds of Bushey Fields Hospital and is staffed and supported by independent mental health charity Dudley Mind.

The closure-threatened centre will remain staffed for the present time under the revised plan but this will be kept under review.

Officials from the charity said eventually Dove House would have to be run by volunteers within a year.

The centre currently provided a range of day activities and also serves as a meeting place each week for those who used it.

Bosses told users of the centre, on the Russells Hall estate, earlier this year that the services at the centre would shut under a shake-up scheme.

Health officials instead wanted the centre to be used by inpatients from the hospital's wards during the run-up to leaving hospital and move services into the community.

In its place the drop-in facilities will continue to run at other locations, such as community centres, and peer support groups will also be started.

But campaigners held public protests outside Dudley Council meetings and forced meetings with charity officials. They said it provides a vital meeting place for people and this would be

Thousands of calls by automated alarms

FIREFIGHTERS have been called out to hundreds of false alarms at hospitals across the region in one year.

Figures released under the Freedom of Information Act show a total of 5,163 false alarms were attended by West Midlands Fire Service during that time frame. Of these, 1,972 were automated alarms set off at dwellings and 2,535 at non-domestic properties.

Over the 12-month period, hospitals throughout the region made up the top 10 addresses the service was called to after automated fire alarms have been triggered. Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital tops the list with 134 alarms, one of which was a legitimate incident. Heartlands Hospital, Birmingham, had 125 activations and eight incidents. Birmingham hospitals make up half of the list with City Hospital in third place with 77 alarms and 5 incidents.

Dudley Russells Hall had 52 alarm calls and two incidents and Walsall Manor 29 calls and one incident.

By Andrew Turton

lost if services were moved elsewhere

One of the campaigners, Joy Collins, said: "We are pleased it is staying open at the moment but this all started with them not talking to us properly before making the decision so we'll keep an eye on the situation."

Dudley Mind chief executive, Martin Mueller, confirmed the Dove House would remain open three days a week for at least 12 months.

"It is correct that representatives from the service users have taken part in designing and reviewing the consultation exercise undertaken over the summer. Staffing is intended to drop over time to just one member of staff and service users will be assisted to take a greater role in managing the drop-in themselves."

"Our experience over the coming year will help us plan how best to ensure that people get the support they need should the drop-in at Dove House eventually become fully self-managed by the people who use it."

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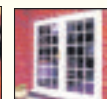
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guys to come out of the Black Coun-
try, Sunjay Brayne has the look, the
talent, the youth and is a damn good
entertainer who knows how to capture
an audience and hold them.

Kicking off with what is almost his
signature tune, Love You Like A Man,
his foot-stomping blues straight away

showcased just why he is so popular
being nominated for and winning
awards as well being given national
air time on Mark Radcliffe's Radio2
folk show.

The precision with which he uses his
guitar is awesome and yet he makes it
look easy. He knows how to work an
audience and by just his second song,
Freight Train, had them eating out of
his hand. He did a shook up version of
Donovan's Colours before going into

Can't Shake These Blues, his voice a
little too mellow for this one but his
incredible guitar playing more than
made up.

For his encore he did A Folk Singer
Earns Every Dime a capella and
blasted out a tribute to Bo Diddley
with Who Do You Love?

Brayne is the full package, if you
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Danny Farragher

Bluegrass magic from Jaywalkers

Jaywalkers, Woodman
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SHORT of going back a couple
of generations in Ten-
nessee, the next best way
to hear one of the most au-
thentic bluegrass sounds is
listen to this trio from the
North West.

With Michael Giverin on
mandolin and guitar, Jay
Bradbury on vocals and
fiddle and Lucy Williams
on double bass and har-
monies they create a fantastic
old time, boot-stomping,
barn-shaking sound.

Mesmerising

Opening with a jug band
tune, Big Sciota, it straight
away showed Bradbury's in-
credible fiddle playing which
is matched perfectly by her
deep, rich voice which gave
her a mesmerising quality
as she took the trio into
Road to Columbus.

Their own song, Cool My
Body Down, called on Giv-
erin's subtle mandolin fol-
lowed by Bradbury's torch
style singing, joined by Wil-
liams slapping the bass like
she was exorcising a demon.

Danny Farragher

REVIEWS

Caro in fine voice for her biggest concert yet

Caro Emerald,
NIA, Birmingham

VINTAGE style and artfully
tweaked retro sounds came
to Birmingham when Dutch
diva Caro Emerald paid her
third visit to the city and
took things to the max with
the biggest headline concert
of her career so far.

Having previously played
the Symphony Hall, this
time six thousand fans
came to see the glamorous
two lips from Amsterdam at
the NIA. They were treated
to an hour and three quar-
ters set which covered most
of the tracks from her two
hit albums, Deleted Scenes
From The Cutting Room
Floor and The Shocking
Miss Emerald.

Jazzy sounds with a hip
hop twist have provided
her hits but the 33-year-old
chanteuse is at greatest ease
on big sultry ballads, her left
hand constantly fluttering
as she channels the emotion.
This was evident right from
the start with I Belong To
You, made even moodier by
its twangy guitar.



Jazz singer Caro Emerald

She was first seen in a
ribbed red 50s style dress
that didn't flatter her,
though helped those at the
back locate her in the ab-
sence of big screens. She
changed twice, into a styl-
ish black and white checked
dress, then a dark top with
shimmering poodle skirt.

Despite a succession of

catchy finger-popping num-
bers, including Tangled Up
and Pack Up The Louie, it
took quite some coaxing to
get the audience on their
feet.

The determined Miss
Emerald and her crack
eight-piece band, including
brass section, violinist, rub-
ber-legged guitarist and re-
cord scratching turntablist,
finally got the crowd bop-
ping with hangover anthem
Liquid Lunch.

The gig went up a notch
after a sassy cover of Shirley
Bassey's History Repeating,
as Caro kicked off her high
heels and went barefoot for
the final numbers.

She closed with the irre-
sistible Stuck, returning for
her breakthrough hit Back
It Up and A Night Like This.
Poignantly, her last song
was the one that made her
aware of her own talent as
a child at a school concert,
a lovely version of Dream a
Little Dream of Me.

Leon Burakowski

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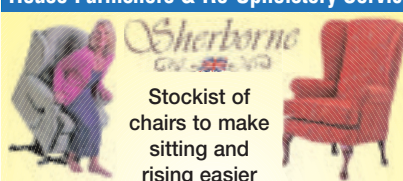
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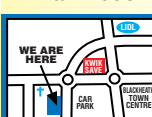


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Tues 25 Nov. 19.00-21.00. 3 wks. £24.00#

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Thurs 6 Nov. 14.30-16.30. 3 wks. £24.00#

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Course Dates: Courses are suspended during 27th Oct. to 2nd Nov. unless stated otherwise

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Earnest attempt to rethink Wilde

SEVERAL of Britain's favourite veteran actors feature in director Lucy Baileys' 're-imagining' of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre.

Wilde's witty lampooning of Victorian hypocrisies is presented as a performance by fictional amateur theatre group The Bunbury Company of Players. However, these 'amateurs' include Nigel Havers, Martin Jarvis, Cherie Lunghi, Christine Kavanagh and, as the formidable Lady Bracknell, Sian Phillips. It is staged from Tuesday to Saturday, October 21 to 25.

Dame Janet Suzman is in Solomon and Marion, set in post-apartheid South Africa, at Birmingham Rep Studio until November 1.

Disney on Ice and Grand dinosaurs

MICKEY Mouse, Minnie Mouse and their friends from Disney's *Mulan*, *The Lion King* and *Pinocchio*, and Disney/Pixar's *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles* and *Toy Story*, take to the ice for a grand celebration in *Disney On Ice* celebrates 100 Years of Magic at the NIA Birmingham from October 22 to November 2.

Other children's shows coming up include *Dinosaur Zoo* at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre for daytime shows from October 23 to 25.

Musical adventure *Rainforest Symphony* is at Birmingham Rep's The Door on Saturday for four daytime performances.

Stax of hits as Blues Brothers guitar legend is to play Robin 2

Top that for 1930s glamour

TOP Hat brings the glamour of Hollywood's golden age to the stage at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday.

Based on the RKO movie and featuring the music of Irving Berlin, this romantic revival of 1930s style and sophistication will feature a cast full of West End experience. This includes acclaimed tap dancer and leading man Alan Burkitt as Broadway sensation Jerry Travers, Charlotte Gooch from the London production of *Dirty Dancing* as society girl Dale Tremont, and Rebecca Thornhill, from the recent London run of *From Here To Eternity*, as Madge Hardwick.

Featuring such songs as *Cheek to Cheek*, *Puttin' on the Ritz* and *Let's Face the Music & Dance*, the musical is staged until November 1. For more information call the box office on (01902) 429212 or see www.grandtheatre.co.uk



Alan Burkitt and Charlotte Gooch will be dancing cheek to cheek at the Grand

A GUITAR legend who has played with musical greats, from Otis Redding to Bob Dylan, is coming to Bilston venue The Robin 2 next Thursday, October 23.

Steve Cropper, 72, who was house guitarist for Stax Records in the 1960s, will join former members of The Animals at the Mount Pleasant venue.

The Missouri-born guitarist and producer was a member of Booker T and the MGs and backed John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd as part of the Blues Brothers Band in the classic 1980 movie. He co-wrote (*Sittin' On*) *The Dock Of The Bay*, *Knock On Wood* and *In The Midnight Hour*.

The band will include former drummer with Georgie 60s hit-makers The Animals, Jon Steel, and the House of the Rising Sun outfit's post-Alan Price keyboardist Mickey Gallagher, who was also one of Ian Dury's Blackheads and keyboards man for The Clash.

Support comes from seven-piece Midlands Mod band Stone Foundation.

Tickets are £18.50 in advance or £20 on the door. Call 01902 401211 or visit therobin.co.uk website.

Other prime gigs over the next few days include: tonight (Thursday), Irish rock guitar hero Bernie Torme, Robin 2; tomorrow, ex-Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr, Wolverhampton Civic Hall; Saturday, Katy B sup-



Soul hero Steve Cropper

ported by Bewdley's Becky Hill, O2 Academy, Birmingham, and that's the same night Toyah returns to her home city to play The Institute in Digbeth.

Meanwhile, Holly Johnson, the former voice of Frankie Goes To Hollywood, will be performing his solo and Frankie hits at The Institute on Sunday, the same night Ed Sheeran starts a two night stint at the LG Arena.

Cambridge band Clean Bandit, whose Rather Be is one of the biggest hits of this year, play the O2 Academy on Wednesday.

The final Paige for West End star

THE first lady of British musical theatre Elaine Paige is marking her 50th year in showbusiness with a farewell concert tour, including a performance at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, tomorrow night (Friday).

At the time of going to Press there were only a few tickets left for Paige by Page by Paige, in which the singer, actress and broadcaster looks back at an illustrious career, including her starring roles in *Evita*, *Cats* and *Chess*.

Other musical highlights this week include Simon Cowell's *Popera* stars Il Divo with Miss Saigon star Lea Salonga at the LG Arena on Saturday. The Bands of the Royal Air Force are in concert at Symphony Hall on Sunday.

Sea shanties from Cornwall

CORNISH choir the Fisherman's Friends are back on the road, following a tragedy last year when singer Trevor Grills and tour manager Paul McMullen were killed in an accident.

The sea shanty singers from Port Isaac will be entertaining their fans at Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday.

Drawing from a repertoire reaching back 200 years, they embrace songs not only from Cornwall but Ireland, Africa, the West Indies and America.

They perform the night after folk singer and virtuoso fiddler Seth Lakeman plays for a sold out crowd at the same venue.

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CHOICE



Lacey Turner
Our Girl (BBC1, 9pm)
Lacey Turner has proved she is a fine actress time and again while portraying troubled Stacey Slater in EastEnders. But Our Girl has given her a chance to stretch herself even further. Sadly, the series draws to a close with this episode, but it's one that leaves viewers wondering what will happen to her character, Molly Dawes, so hopefully another run will be heading our way in the near future. Here, Molly returns from Afghanistan, and with difficult questions raining down upon her, it's clear that the things she's seen and heard there have had a life-changing impact. The devastating attack on Captain James and Smurf has left this soldier picking up the threads of her life and weaving them into some kind of future – but what will that entail?

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.30 Match of the Day. (R) **9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. 10.00 Sunday Morning Live. 11.00 Sunday Politics. 12.15 MOTD2 Extra. 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.15 Bargain Hunt.** (R) **2.15 Escape to the Country.** (R) **3.00 Talk to the Animals.** (R) **4.00 Points of View. 4.15 Lifestile. 4.25 Songs of Praise. 5.00 Pointless Celebrities.** (R) **5.50 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.**
6.20 Countryfile: Autumn Special. Seasonal edition in which the team finds out how autumn marks a time of transformation for the countryside. Matt Baker finds out how conkers are under attack from tiny predators, Ellie Harrison goes foraging in the forest with leading chef Raymond Blanc and weatherman John Hammond reveals the science behind the season during a canoe trip down the River Wye with Tom Heap. Adam Henson visits a turkey farm that's ensuring its birds will be safe on bonfire night and cameraman Richard Taylor-Jones heads to Skomer in search of autumn's newest arrivals – grey seal pups.
7.20 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman reveal which couples are in the dance-off, leaving their fates in the hands of the judges, and Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett perform a duet.
8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce and the team visit Chenies Manor near Amsersham in Buckinghamshire, where items include a painting by one of Britain's first modern artists and a Star Wars helmet.
9.00 Our Girl. Molly faces difficult decisions as she returns home from Afghanistan, struggling to pick up the pieces after the devastating attack on the Captain and Smurf. Last in the series.
10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.
10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman presents action from the latest Premier League matches.
11.30 The Apprentice. Alan Sugar begins another search for a business partner, offering a fresh group of candidates the chance to win an investment to get their idea off the ground. (R)
12.30 The Apprentice. (R) **1.30 Weather for the Week Ahead. 1.35 BBC News.**

BBC2

6.00 Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.00 Countryfile.** (R) **8.00 Gardeners' World.** (R) **8.30 The Beechgrove Garden.** **9.00 The Football League Show.** (R) **10.20 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.** **11.50 The Great British Bake Off Masterclass.** (R) **12.50 The Great British Bake Off Masterclass.** (R) **1.50 Lorraine Pascal: How to Be a Better Cook.** (R) **2.20 Film: Seven Years in Tibet.** (1997) Fact-based drama, starring Brad Pitt.
4.30 Coast. (R) **5.00 Flog It!** (R)
6.00 Inside the Animal Mind. Combining remarkable demonstrations of abilities with revealing photography, Chris Packham travels the world to uncover the secrets of animals' intelligence, emotions and self-awareness. The first episode explores the remarkable ways creatures use their senses, examining how dogs' powerful ability to detect smell creates a bizarre alternative reality for them. (R)
7.00 Human Universe. In episode two, Professor Brian Cox is off to India, where he assesses arguably the first evidence of rational thought in literature – the poetry of the Vedic monks. They pondered mankind's origins, realising there must have been a day with no yesterday – a day of creation – prompting the age-old question of where did the universe come from? Brian marvels that we live in a universe that seems to follow rules – the laws of physics. Rules that have allowed us to consider space on the grandest scale, travelling to the most distant, farthest reaches of the cosmos just by using our minds. (R)
8.00 Wonders of the Monsoon. The winds turn dry and bring drought, and as predators attack those animals that gather at precious waterholes, a bearded pig hunts for seafood and nomads haggle over camels.
9.00 Sacred Rivers with Simon Reeve. The adventurer travels along the Yangtze in China, seeing ancient rock carvings and the biggest power station on the planet before arriving in Shanghai.
10.00 Film: Cast Away. (2000) Adventure drama, with Tom Hanks and Helen Hunt.
12.15 Film: Good Hair. (2009) **1.45 Sign Zone: Countryfile.** (R) **2.45 Holby City.** (R) **3.45 This is BBC Two.**

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25 Pat & Stan.** (R) **6.35 Pat & Stan.** (R) **6.40 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **6.50 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **7.05 Canimals.** (R) **7.10 Canimals.** (R) **7.20 Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.25 Sooty.** (R) **7.40 Mr Bean: The Animated Series.** (R) **7.50 Ultimate Spider-Man.** **8.20 Horrid Henry.** **8.30 Big Time Rush.** **9.00 The Aquabats! Super Show!** **9.25 Dickinson's Real Deal.** (R) **10.25 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **11.25 ITV News; Weather.** **11.35 Film: Carry On Up the Jungle.** (1970) **1.25 All Star Family Fortunes.** (R) **2.10 The X Factor.** (R) **4.30 Downtown Abbey.** (R) **5.30 Tipping Point: Lucky Stars.** (R)
6.30 Regional Programme; Weather. **6.45 ITV News; Weather.**
7.00 Sunday Night at the Palladium. Rob Brydon introduces music by Neil Diamond, Paloma Faith and Texas, and comedy from Milton Jones and Daniel Sloss.
8.00 The X Factor Results. The tension in the studio is palpable as the contestants learn their fate, and Dermot O'Leary introduces performances by some of the biggest names in the charts.
9.00 Downtown Abbey. There is chemistry aplenty between Richard E Grant and Elizabeth McGovern, perhaps because they previously played a married couple in the BBC's Scarlet Pimpernel series in 1998. Their Downton characters – art expert Simon Bricker and Lady Cora – have grown close over the past few weeks, and their flirting reaches boiling point in the latest episode. She's enjoying the attention he gives her, but is he about to cross a line – and does she want him to? Cora's eldest child, Mary, is also enjoying male company, this time that of Charles Blake, who's about to do her a big favour.
10.05 ITV News; Weather.
10.25 Perspectives: Paul O'Grady: Gypsy Rose Lee – the Queen of Burlesque. Paul O'Grady travels to New York to explore the life of burlesque performer Gypsy Rose Lee, who emerged from childhood stardom to become a celebrated striptease artist in the 1930s. (R)
11.25 Piers Morgan's Life Stories: Donny Osmond. (R)
12.20 The Store. 2.35 Motorsport UK. 3.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **4.15 ITV Nightscreen. 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.10 NFL: The American Football Show. (R) **7.00 Yorkshire Marathon. 7.55 Celeb Gogglebox and More: The Best Bits of SU2C. 9.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces.** (R) **1.30 Deal or No Deal. 2.30 Fifteen to One. 3.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **3.55 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **4.25 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **4.50 Film: Journey to the Center of the Earth.** (2008) Fantasy adventure, starring Brendan Fraser.
6.35 Channel 4 News.
7.05 Post Pawns. James Constantinou meets a friend in Spain about a £100,000 loan on a luxury yacht, while a widow considers parting with her late husband's vintage car. Last in the series. (R)
8.00 Hitler's Hidden Drug Habit: Secret History. Obviously today nobody would attempt to paint Hitler in a positive light, but during the Nazi era, he rose to power and popularity for a reason. He was portrayed to the German people as a great man, one who was in control of his own destiny and that of his country, and who was infallible – all but a super-human. Unsurprisingly, this was far from the truth. However, the facts, which this documentary gleans from his physician's diaries, are more remarkable than any fiction. It transpires that the leader was in fact a hypochondriac and a nervous wreck, who became increasingly dependent on a cocktail of drugs including powerful stimulants and depressants – uppers and downers – as well as all manner of pseudo-medical 'cures' for real and imagined illnesses.
9.00 Homeland. Carrie heads back to the US for an official inquiry, where she continues to struggle with her ambivalence toward motherhood. Meanwhile, Quinn spirals further out of control, and a disgraced former case officer reveals disturbing new information.
10.05 Film: The Adjustment Bureau. (2011) A politician discovers shadowy figures are manipulating his life and tries to resist the fate they have planned for him. Sci-fi thriller, starring Matt Damon and Emily Blunt.
12.15 How to Be a Billionaire. (R) **1.10 American Football Live. 4.45 Mobil 1.** (R) **5.10 SuperScrimpers.** (R) **5.25 Deal or No Deal.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. 6.05 Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15 Angelina Ballerina.** (R) **6.30 Seaside Antics. 6.35 The Mr Men Show.** (R) **6.45 Chloe's Closet.** (R) **7.00 Olly the Little White Van.** (R) **7.05 Bananas in Pyjamas.** (R) **7.25 Make Way for Noddy.** (R) **7.35 Paw Patrol. 7.45 Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures.** (R) **7.55 Little Princess.** (R) **8.05 The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky.** (R) **8.25 Wanda and the Alien. 8.40 Zack and Quack. 8.55 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom.** (R) **9.10 Jelly Jam.** (R) **9.25 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. 10.00 Great Birmingham Run.** Live coverage of the half-marathon. **12.20 Criminals: Caught on Camera.** (R) **12.50 Film: Spider-Man 3.** (2007) Superhero sequel, starring Tobey Maguire. **3.25 Film: Bewitched.** (2005) Romantic fantasy comedy, with Nicole Kidman and Will Ferrell. **5.20 Film: Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked.** (2011) Comedy sequel, starring Jason Lee.
7.00 5 News Weekend.
7.05 Film: Jackie Chan's The Forbidden Kingdom. (2008) An American teenager obsessed with kung fu movies is sent back in time to ancient China, where he joins the battle to free the imprisoned Monkey King. The only problem is he has no martial arts skills of his own, and will need the assistance of two legendary warriors to become the hero he needs to be. Martial arts adventure, starring Jet Li.
9.00 Film: Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves. (1991) An English nobleman returns home from the crusades to find his father has been murdered and the local people are repressed by the tyrannical rule of the Sheriff of Nottingham. Branded an outlaw, he recruits a group of bandits to fight for justice and protect the downtrodden. Action adventure, starring Kevin Costner, Alan Rickman, Morgan Freeman and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio.
12.05 Film: Highlander. (1986) Immortal warriors must fight each other in duels to the death through the centuries, until only one survives. Fantasy action adventure, with Christopher Lambert and Sean Connery. **2.05 SuperCasino.** Live interactive gaming. **3.10 Benefits, Babies and Jail.** People living on the dole in South Yorkshire. (R) **4.00 House Doctor. 4.25 Make It Big.** (R) **5.15 Angels of Jarm.** (R) **5.40 Roary the Racing Car.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Great Movie Mistakes. 8.00 Doctor Who. 8.45 Doctor Who: The Ultimate Guide. 9.00 Come Fly with Me. 10.00 Family Guy. 10.45 Bad Education. 11.15 The Revolution Will Be Televised. 11.45 American Dad! 12.30 Film: Butterfly on a Wheel (2007) 2.00 Bad Education. 2.30 The Revolution Will Be Televised. 3.00 Impractical Jokers. 3.30 Bad Education. 4.00 Close
BBC Four
7.00 The Story of Top of the Pops 1979. 8.00 BBC Music: John Peel Lecture 2014 with Iggy Pop. 9.00 Storyville: Russia's Toughest Prison – The Condemned. 10.20 Horror Europa with Mark Gatiss. 11.50 Mr Blue Sky: The Story of Jeff Lynne and ELO. 12.50 Jeff Lynne's ELO at Hyde Park. 2.15 Storyville: Russia's Toughest Prison – The Condemned. 3.35 Close
ITV2
11.30 The X Factor. 1.50 Nicole Scherzinger: The Hot Desk. 2.05 You've Been Framed! 2.35 Film: A Little Princess (1995) 4.35 Film: Miss Congeniality (2000) 6.50 Film: Back to the Future Part II (1989) 9.00 The Xtra Factor. 10.00 Tricked. 11.00 Bad Bridesmaid. 12.00 Film: Funny People (2009) 2.35 Nicole Scherzinger: The Hot Desk. 2.45 Teleshopping. 5.45 ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
11.45 Inspector Morse. 1.55 Rosemary & Thyme. 3.35 Film: Carry On Loving (1970) 4.55 Film: Columbo: Etude in Black (1972) 7.00 Lewis. 9.00 I'll Be Alone on the Night. 10.00 Film: The Human Stain (2003) 12.05 Above Suspicion: The Red Dahlia. 1.10 William and Mary. 2.55 World Kitchen. 3.20 ITV3 Nightscreen. 3.40 Emmerdale
ITV4
11.10 Highway Patrol. 11.40 Ax Men. 1.35 River Monsters. 4.35 Film: A Reason to Live, A Reason to Die (1972) 6.25 Film: Superman II (1980) 9.00 Film: Jaws 2 (1978) 11.20 Film: Cape Fear (1991) 1.55 Jean-Claude Van Damme: Behind Closed Doors. 2.50 ITV4 Nightscreen. 3.00 Teleshopping
E4
12.35 Made in Chelsea. 1.40 Film: Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (2009) 3.30 Melissa & Joey. 4.30 Suburgatory. 5.00 New Girl. 5.30 The Big Bang Theory. 8.00 Film: The Day the Earth Stood Still (2008) 10.05 The Inbetweeners. 11.05 Rude Tube: Total Stunts. 12.10 Glee. 1.15 The Mindy Project. 1.40 Rules of Engagement. 2.35 Rude Tube: Total Stunts. 3.30 Hollyoaks
Film4
11.00 The Fighting Seabees (1944) 1.00 Stardust (2007) 3.30 Home Alone 3 (1997) 5.40 The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (2008) 9.00 Kick-Ass (2010) 11.15 Sanctum (2011) 1.25 The Conformist (1970) 3.30 Close

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MONDAY
The Business, Channel 5, 10.55pm
 A criminal flees London in the 1980s to start a new life on the Costa del Sol. He is soon drawn into the inner circle of a British gangster living in exile, but his relationship with a psychotic crook's girlfriend threatens to bring his criminal career to an abrupt end. Crime drama, starring Danny Dyer and Geoff Bell. (2005)

TUESDAY
Stolen Innocence, Channel 5, 3.15pm
 A woman is rushed to hospital after giving birth to a still-born girl, only to be accused by the police of murdering the child. Demanding to see the midwife who was treating her at home, she discovers the woman was an imposter and is certain her baby has been kidnapped. Thriller, starring Gina Philips and Anna Galvin. (2007)



Out of Sight, Friday, ITV, 11.10pm

WEDNESDAY
Tornado Warning, Channel 5, 3.15pm
 A teenager whose home was destroyed by an unusual tornado grows up to be an amateur storm chaser, and investigates when similar freak storms start occurring across the world. He enlists the aid of a meteorologist in getting to the truth, and discovers the strange weather is cover for an alien invasion. Sci-fi thriller, starring Kari Wuhrer and Jeff Fahey. (2012)

THURSDAY
Mom at Sixteen, Channel 5, 3.15pm
 A pregnant teenager's well-meaning mother forces her to keep the birth a secret and decides to raise the baby as if it were her own – but the deception raises unforeseen practical and ethical problems for all concerned. Drama, starring Mercedes Ruehl. (2005)

FRIDAY
Out of Sight, ITV, 11.10pm
 A charming bank robber breaks out of jail and takes a female US Marshal hostage. Managing to escape, she sets out to track him down as he prepares for one last job – but as the chase intensifies, so do their feelings for each other. Steven Soderbergh's romantic crime drama, with George Clooney. (1998)

Perfect Creature, BBC2, 12.35am
 In an alternative version of the 1960s, vampires have lived alongside humans for 300 years. However, the stability of this world is shattered when one bloodsucker returns to his predatory ways, posing a deadly threat to both races. Thriller, starring Dougray Scott. (2006)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Sarah works her magic once again in new series

Sometimes it can be hard to muster up much sympathy for the people featured on Sarah Beeny's property shows, especially those with a massive budget.

"We can't seem to sell our house," they cry to Sarah, while tripping over dog toys and ignoring the stench of their beloved pets food in the corner of the kitchen.

Do they really need it spelling out?

Okay, maybe we're being a bit too harsh. After all, the housing market is a nightmare at the moment – and the folk we're about to meet in the property guru's latest TV effort know this only too well. In fact, desperate times call for desperate measures.

As Sarah will explain, the way we sell our houses is changing, and by 2020, it's predicted that half of the UK's house sales may be done online. Property websites are now getting billions of hits every year, and pioneer homeowners are shunning the services of the country's 15,000 traditional estate agents and instead signing up with online estate agents to sell their

homes – all in the hope they will save thousands of pounds in fees. But is this the right way to go?

Sarah is making it her mission in this new series to find out the answer to that question, as she meets ordinary homeowners who are taking on the challenge of selling their homes in this way. She will also be offering her practical advice to those who are struggling to sell in these difficult times. Of course we know she can be trusted – her advice is, well, safe as houses.

The presenter has taken a keen interest in the market since she began her own property developing business with her brother and husband. Since then she's found time in her busy schedule to have four boys, create dating website Mysinglefriend, present umpteen hugely successful property series, and renovate Rise Hall in East Yorkshire (during which the many ups and downs were documented).

It's a wonder she's managed to find time for yet another series – but she has...

In it, the featured sellers are taking a big risk by doing it all online – they will have to value their own property, and arrange their own viewings. However, their inexperience could mean they underestimate the market. In short; if they get it right, these homeowner hopefuls could stand to save a whopping amount of money – but if they get it wrong, it could indeed be an extremely costly mistake.

Kicking off the series, Sarah heads to East Sussex where she meets Terri Measures. She isn't able to maintain her listed country cottage, and is desperate to sell up after her recent divorce.

Meanwhile, over in Nottingham, we meet the Watsons. They bought their four-bedroom semi-detached house in a bidding war five years ago, but are now facing selling at a loss.

These families are desperate to sell up and secure every penny they can get, but are they right to shun the high street professionals and sell online?



Sarah Beeny's How to Sell Your Home, Monday, Channel 4, 8.30pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
New Tricks
BBC1, 9pm

Back in 1983, 16-year-old Amy Taskerland was murdered on the night of the school disco. More than 30 years later, the unearthing of a time capsule and the discovery of her voice on a mix tape inside prompts Miller and co to delve back into the case, starting by interviewing Amy's best friend Harriet and her former teacher Mr Hines. The recording features a strange mix of music and poetry, including words from a speech written in secret for the Queen for broadcast in the event of a nuclear war. But how did Amy get a copy of it, and was its secret nature the reason she was killed? Elsewhere, Miller enjoys her first romance since her divorce, while Gerry goes on his future son-in-law's stag night. Amy Nuttall (Emmerdale, Downton Abbey) and Jack Shepherd (Wycliffe) guest star. Last in the series.

TUESDAY
The BBC Children in Need Sewing Bee
BBC2, 8pm

The competition returns for three special editions as 12 celebrities take to their sewing machines in a bid to raise money for this year's BBC Children in Need appeal and inspire viewers to get creative. The first four celebrities to face the expert eye of

Savile Row's Patrick Grant and sewing tutor May Martin as they take on an A-line skirt pattern challenge are doctor and TV presenter Dawn Harper, Hairly Biker Dave Myers, radio DJ and presenter Edith Bowman and actress Wendi Peters. Jenny Eclair presents.

WEDNESDAY
Surprise Surprise
ITV, 8pm

New series. Holly Willoughby returns to make dreams come true for unsuspecting members of the public. Singer-songwriter Pharrell Williams gives the surprise of a lifetime to 21-year-old fundraiser Holly Addison from Staffordshire, while 26-year-old Jodi Bickley from Birmingham, who touched the hearts of thousands across the world by writing letters of love and hope, receives a dinner date with polymath Stephen Fry, as well as being treated to a musical performance by American pop star Nicole Scherzinger. Plus, two remarkable foster carers who have taken in more than 250 children are

thanked for their dedication, and a woman who sponsored a boy in Africa through his education meets him for the first time.

Grayson Perry: Who Are You?
Channel 4, 10pm

New series. The Turner Prize-winning artist spends time with people who are facing a crossroads or a crisis with their identity and represents each of them in some form of art, whether as miniatures, large tapestries, statues or pots. All of the works will be shown in the permanent collection of the National Portrait Gallery in a special display. In the first edition, he meets former politician Chris Huhne, Big Brother's Bit on the Side presenter Rylan Clark, single mother-of-five Kayleigh, who has recently converted to Islam, and Jazz, who was born a girl but has embarked on a course of male hormones to begin life as a man.



Surprise Surprise, Wednesday, ITV, 8pm

THURSDAY
Life Story
BBC1, 9pm

Naturalist David Attenborough documents the universal story that unites humanity with every other animal on the planet – the journey through life, and the goal to continue the bloodline through offspring. This edition focuses on the first hurdle any animal will face, surviving infancy. Camaras follow flightless barnacle goose chicks as they strive to find food, leaping 400ft down a cliff from the ledge where they hatched. Meanwhile, in New Zealand, young fur seals have stumbled across a safe haven in which they can learn how to avoid predators, while deep in the Gobi Desert, the long-eared jerboa learns to use its impeccable hearing to catch insect pray.

FRIDAY
Marvel's Agents of SHIELD
Channel 4, 8pm

New series. The comic-book drama returns following the explosive first-season finale, and Agent Phil Coulson is ready to start rebuilding SHIELD. Hydra is also on a recruitment drive, with members including The Kraken circling SHIELD. So as the agents try to find new allies, who can they trust – and who has an ulterior motive for getting involved?

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HALESOWEN, Hagley Road£795 pcm - Fees
An unfurnished detached house within close proximity of Halesowen. Briefly comprising Of: 3 Bedrooms, large lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom with separate w.c, driveway parking & garage, double glazing, gas central heating (new boiler) EPC: D



AMBLEGOTE, 41a/b/c High Street£775 pcm - Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a new build home on a select development 'Crystal Gardens' features homes of 3 generous size bedrooms (master with en-suite) finished to an exceptional standard. Featuring spacious lounge/dining areas, well appointed kitchens, downstairs WC, 3 bedrooms with family bathrooms & master bedroom with en-suite, 2 allocated parking spaces, front & rear gardens. These homes will not be available for long. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Stourbridge Road£750 pcm - Fees
Well presented 3 bedroom semi detached house with large driveway for up to 6 cars in this very popular residential area. Entrance Hall leading to large living room/dining area, fitted kitchen, large private rear garden with open fields at the top, 3 bedrooms, family bathroom, garage and driveway to front. EPC: E



NEW PRICE
ROWLEY REGIS, Spring Vale Road£650 pcm - Fees
1ST RENTS HALF PRICE! An opportunity to acquire a well maintained traditional detached property situated in a popular residential location in a quiet cul-de-sac close to local schools, amenities and road links. Featuring a large living room, fitted kitchen with a double range cooker, W.C, 2 double & 1 single bedroom/study, bathroom with shower, driveway/garage. A lovely property not to be missed. Minimum contract 12 months. EPC: D



QUARRY BANK, Stockwell Avenue£650 pcm - Fees
Wow what a fantastic family home offering oodles of space! With 3 good size bedrooms, lovely spacious lounge, large kitchen/dining room, brand new family bathroom with shower, driveway & garage, front & rear gardens. A long term rental opportunity which will be snapped up! EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Hoosen Close£575 pcm - Fees
A delightful modern refurbished mid terraced house located within a desirable quiet cul de sac. Featuring a lovely refitted kitchen with electric oven/hob, fridge freezer and hotpoint washer/dryer. Gas central heating, large lounge with patio doors offering views across a mature herbaceous garden benefiting from a sunny aspect, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, garage, parking space. Close to bus links to Birmingham. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Haden Arch Court£575 pcm - Fees
Contemporary living in Halesowen. This 1st floor spacious apartment above the archway, within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre and buses, the apartment features gas central heating, double glazing, open plan living room, fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower cubicle, allocated parking. EPC: B



HAGLEY, Newlands Close £575 pcm - Fees
A superb modern ground floor apartment located near to Hagley Village & situated close to motorway links. Featuring an open plan lounge/ kitchen with appliances, double bedroom with fitted wardrobes and en-suite shower room & 1 large single bedroom, white bathroom suite, allocated parking, secure entry system. Not to be missed!! EPC: C



NEW
HALESOWEN, Talbot Street£575 pcm - Fees
Step inside this fantastic 3 bedroom terrace property. Renovated throughout and to a very high standard, featuring 2 great size reception rooms, a brand new kitchen, new fully fitted bathroom with electric shower, windows & doors, carpets and gas central heating system. This property will not be available long. EPC: E



CRADLEY HEATH, Station Road£550 pcm - Fees
A newly decorated & carpeted 3 bedroom mid terraced house in this popular location minutes away from Old Hill train station. This spacious property has 2 reception rooms, downstairs walk in shower room, modern fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms & 1 single. Private rear garden. On road parking. EPC: E



CRADLEY HEATH, Mill Road£525 pcm - Fees
Located on this very popular Timbertree Estate and ideally situated for local schools and transport links, 1 double and 2 small single bedroomed house features 1 reception room, brand new kitchen/diner, house bathroom with shower and tiled garden. On road parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Stour Court £500 pcm - Fees
A great opportunity to rent this spacious and well proportioned ground floor apartment in a popular location. Large & airy living room, fully fitted kitchen with appliances, 2 double bedrooms, white bathroom suite with shower. Outside there is allocated parking and communal gardens. EPC: C



DUDLEY, Attingham Drive £495 pcm - Fees
A part furnished 2nd floor apartment close to Dudley Town Centre. Featuring an open plan lounge/dining kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with a shower, electric storage heating, double glazing, alarm, allocated parking. EPC: TBC



NEW
HALESOWEN, Cross Street£495 pcm - Fees
Beautifully presented and very close to Halesowen Town Centre. This lovely ground floor maisonette features 1 double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, dining kitchen, brand new bathroom with shower, private rear garden and driveway parking for 2 cars. EPC: E



CRADLEY HEATH, Wycherley Way£475 pcm - Fees
A well presented unfurnished ground floor apartment briefly comprising: living room, 1 double bedroom with fitted wardrobes and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower. Benefits include gas central heating, double glazing, communal gardens, parking space. Close to local amenities. EPC: C



NETHERTON, Round Street£475 pcm - Fees
Set in a quiet road, is this lovely semi-detached home. Featuring gas central heating, 1 reception room, fitted kitchen, 1 double and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower, rear garden and driveway parking for 2 cars. Popular residential street close to Netherton High Street, 2 months deposit and a guarantor is required. (THE GUARANTOR MUST BE A HOME OWNER, FAMILY MEMBER AND WORKING). EPC: D



NEW
NETHERTON, Halesowen Road£475 pcm - Fees
A distinctive unfurnished detached nailer's cottage style home, briefly comprising of: 2 cosy reception rooms with feature Arga, 2 small bedrooms, fitted kitchen with white goods, original Laura Ashley downstairs bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, garage and driveway parking, front and rear gardens. EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Clifton Street£450 pcm - Fees
A stunning apartment set in the Old Quarter of Stourbridge. Ideal for the town centre and transport links. The apartment is on the 1st floor and features a great size lounge, new kitchen, new bathroom with shower, 1 double bedroom, double glazing and electric heating, on road parking. EPC: TBC



NEW PRICE
HALESOWEN, Upper Ashley Street£450 pcm - Fees
Undergone a complete re-decoration and not to be missed! Set in this quiet residential area close to Blacketh Town Centre is this lovely semi detached home featuring lounge, fitted kitchen with gas oven/hob, 1 double bedroom, brand new bathroom suite with shower, electric heating, parking, unfurnished. EPC: D



NEW
HALESOWEN, Howley Grange Road£435 pcm - Fees
Unfurnished ground floor apartment available in this popular location. The property features gas central heating Living room/fitted kitchen with archway through to 1 double bedroom, shower room, allocated parking. Gas (in winter months) and water rates included in the rental. EPC: C



ROWLEY REGIS, Oldbury Road£425 pcm - Fees
Recently refurbished, very generous sized unfurnished flat above shop. Gas central heating, part double glazing, lounge, fitted breakfast kitchen, 1 bedroom, bathroom with shower, on road parking. Rent includes water rates. EPC: E

PROPERTY

This impressive family home has a paddock



AN IMPRESSIVE five-bedroomed detached family home in Tansley Hill Road, Dudley, has a pony paddock.
It is for sale through Scriven & Co at £550,000.

It has a porch, reception hall, cloakroom, WC, dining room with a flame-effect gas fire, a lounge with gas fire, a kitchen/breakfast room with an Aga, walk-in pantry, lobby, side hall and family room. There are four first floor bedrooms and a bathroom with a shaped bath and bedroom five/study with shower room off. There are two garages. Contact Scriven & Co on 0121 4224011 or visit www.scriven.co.uk



Views of Warley Woods from a five-bed house



A FIVE-BED family home in Harborne Road, Bearwood, has excellent views over Warley Woods.

It is for sale through Robert Oulsnam at £409,950 with no chain.

With a porch and entrance hall and modern WC, it has a through lounge complete with a marble fireplace and patio doors to gardens.

The dining room has a living flame gas fire and a modern kitchen includes built-in appliances and breakfast bar. There are five bedrooms and shower room, block paved drive and double garage.

Contact Robert Oulsnam on 0121 4299986 or visit www.oulsnam.net website.



Development renovation project of high standards

THIS property known as The Lodge is a fine example of a 'bare brick' renovation project.

It forms part of the prestigious up and coming Danescourt Manor development at Wolverhampton, created by the well-known and respected construction company Bantock Homes Ltd to a high standard and exceptional specification.

It is on the market for £375,000 via estate agent Stevenston. It has been sympathetically restored, skillfully re-configured and further enhanced by way of the addition of a contrasting stand alone double storey modern contemporary wing.

Details on 01902 753131 or see the www.stevenson-estates.co.uk website.



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BLEAKHOUSE ROAD, OLDBURY



NEW PRICE

IMPRESSIONS DETACHED HOME. REFURBISHED TO A HIGH STANDARD with quality fittings. 28FT LIVING ROOM, 2 further reception rooms LUXURY FITTED KITCHEN WITH SIEMENS APPLIANCES. 5 DOUBLE BEDROOMS, family bathroom, GATED PARKING, garage & rear garden. Gas central heating & UPVC double glazing. NO UPWARD CHAIN. INTERNAL INSPECTION ESSENTIAL. EPC Rating: D. Ref: D1506

£365,000 Ref: D1506

LONG LANE, HALESOWEN



NEW PRICE

EXTENDED detached family home with LARGE PRIVATE rear garden. 18ft extended lounge & separate dining room. Extended 15ft breakfast kitchen, 19ft utility & downstairs shower room & WC. REFITTED family bathroom, 4 bedrooms & box room on 1st floor. GARAGE & BLOCKPAVED driveway. UPVC DG & gas central heating. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1464

£292,000 Ref: D1464

MANOR LANE, HALESOWEN



NEW PRICE

•••NO UPWARD CHAIN••• SPACIOUS DETACHED FAMILY HOME. Set back from the road in private drive - LANDSCAPED REAR GARDEN WITH SOUTHERLY ASPECT. 20ft lounge, dining room, kitchen, conservatory & DWG. 3 bedrooms & bathroom. Driveway with parking, carport and garage. Double glazing, GCH. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1487

£249,950 Ref: D1487

FRANKLEY AVENUE, HALESOWEN



NEW

WELL PRESENTED 4 bed home with GARAGE & DRIVEWAY. NO UPWARD CHAIN - NEW UPVC double glazing (2014). FITTED kitchen & UPVC CONSERVATORY. 20ft lounge & separate dining room. Master fitted bedroom with ENSUITE shower room, 3 further bedrooms & family bathroom with WHITE SUITE. LANDSCAPED rear garden with private aspect. Gas central heating fitted. In SOUGHT AFTER area. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1182

£239,950 Ref: D1182

GREENHILL ROAD, HALESOWEN



NEW

NO UPWARD CHAIN - SPACIOUS DETACHED BUNGALOW in need of some improvement. 2 DOUBLE bedrooms both with en-suite WCs. 22 ft kitchen diner, separate utility room & 14ft lounge. 2 ATTIC ROOMS on 1st floor. Gas central heating & majority UPVC DG. GARAGE & driveway giving off road parking. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1515

£224,950 Ref: D1515

WOODGREEN CROFT, OLDBURY



NEW

VERY WELL PRESENTED & EXTENDED home in sought after CUL-DE-SAC location close to the Hagley Road West. REFITTED 12ft kitchen with QUALITY appliances. 15ft lounge with archway to 14ft dining room. REFITTED bathroom with LUXURY white suite. 3 bedrooms with BESPOKE fitted furniture in the 2 doubles. GARAGE & driveway to front. Lawn garden to rear with PRIVATE aspect. GCH & UPVC DG. EPC rating: E. Ref: D1517

£214,950 Ref: D1517

EDENHALL ROAD, QUINTON



NEW PRICE

SPACIOUS & EXTENDED semi-detached home. EXTENDED 16ft kitchen, 14ft conservatory, lounge & separate dining room. 3 bedrooms & bathroom. Large 16ft x 15ft (widest part) GARAGE. Blockpaved DRIVEWAY & garden to front, lawned rear garden with patio. Gas central heating & majority UPVC double glazing fitted. SOUGHT AFTER TREE LINED ROAD. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1495

£205,000 Ref: D1495

ELM CROFT, OLDBURY



NEW PRICE

EXTENDED semi-detached home in CUL-DE-SAC location and having 3 DOUBLE bedrooms. EXTENDED & REFITTED breakfast kitchen, EXTENDED 18ft lounge, dining room & study. REFITTED family bathroom with white suite. SOUTH facing rear garden. UPVC DG & gas central heating. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1481

£189,950 Ref: D1481

PERRY HILL ROAD, OLDBURY



NEW

NO CHAIN - Well presented EXTENDED semi with PARKING to front - SITUATED CLOSE TO OLDBURY QUINTON BORDER & HAGLEY ROAD. Lounge & 22ft kitchen/diner/family room, 3 bedrooms on first floor, bathroom & loft room. Enclosed garden to rear. Majority UPVC double glazing & gas central heating - EPC rating: E. Ref: D1521

£179,950 Ref: D1521

PARK ROAD, SMETHWICK



NEW

SPACIOUS & well presented home close to LIGHTWOODS PARK & Bearwood High Street. 2 LARGE reception rooms & EXTENDED 15ft kitchen to rear with utility room. REFITTED shower room & 3 DOUBLE bedrooms on 1st floor. Garden to rear with feature patio area. UPVC DG & gas central heating fitted. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1525

£165,000 Ref: D1525

CORNWALL AVENUE, OLDBURY



NEW

SUPERB terraced home with DRIVEWAY for up to 6 cars on the front!! REFITTED 11ft breakfast kitchen, utility area and 21ft lounge diner. 3 good sized bedrooms on 1st floor & family bathroom with WHITE SUITE. UPVC double glazing & gas central heating fitted. Lawn rear garden with patio. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1523

£134,950 Ref: D1523

MAYPOLE ROAD, OLDBURY



NEW

WELL PRESENTED terraced home with DRIVEWAY to front. Having 2 reception rooms, REFITTED kitchen & downstairs WC. 3 bedrooms & family bathroom on 1st floor. Lawn gardens to both front & rear of the property. NO UPWARD CHAIN (probate being processed). Gas central heating & UPVC double glazing. EPC rating: C. Ref: D1513

£124,950 Ref: D1513

HALES LANE, SMETHWICK



NEW

NO UPWARD CHAIN - SPACIOUS home in need of some improvement. DRIVEWAY to front giving off road parking. 12ft lounge to front & 19ft kitchen diner to rear. 3 bedrooms & family bathroom on first floor. Gas central heating & UPVC double glazing fitted. Garden to rear. EPC rating: F. Ref: D1514

£120,000 Ref: D1514

RICHMOND ROAD, SMETHWICK



NEW

WELL PRESENTED terraced home just off Bearwood High Street. 24ft lounge diner off the hallway. MODERN 11ft kitchen to rear with utility room separate. Downstairs bathroom with WHITE SUITE. 3 DOUBLE bedrooms on 1st floor. LOW MAINTENANCE paved rear garden with shed. Gas central heating & UPVC double glazing. EPC rating: D. Ref: D1518

£117,000 Ref: D1518

HOWLEY GRANGE RD, HALESOWEN



TO LET

AVAILABLE NOW - RENT INCLUDES GAS/WATER BILL - ONE BEDROOM ground floor flat comprises of entrance hall with archway to 14' lounge, shower room with white suite and kitchen with white goods. Private garden to the rear. Close to local amenities and Bus stops. EPC rating C. Admin fee £100 Per Tenant. Ref: DL178

£435 PCM Ref: DL178

WIGORN ROAD, SMETHWICK



TO LET

UNFURNISHED & AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY - LARGE & REFURBISHED home with 2 reception rooms, REFITTED WC & REFITTED kitchen on ground floor. 3 bedrooms & REFITTED bathroom on 1st floor. Lovely garden with sunny aspect. Gas central heating & UPVC DBG. NO DOGS, NO PETS, NO SMOKERS. EPC Rating C - Subject to admin fee of £100 per tenant. Ref: DL179

£725 PCM Ref: DL179

Residential Sales & Lettings

PROPERTY EXPERTS

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Record levels of new buy to let activity according to Love Your Postcode Estate Agents

Buy-to-let investments appear to be back in great demand thanks to an improved investor appetite and greater choice of mortgage products according to Mr Singh director of the recent multi-award winning group

The return of buy-to-let investment is most encouraging in 2014. We are finding that 30 percent of all group sales activity is with investors. With the property being sold and placed back on to the rental market with ourselves.

This is a real delight considering the last 5 years have been very slow and sluggish with a near halt in new activity. Luckily, as anticipated, the UK has come out of two recessions very quickly and fiercely, with numbers now back ahead of the pre-recession levels.

We are finding that the experienced buy to let

landlords are back and growing their portfolios with confidence again and this really is an important part of the market. Research by Mortgages for Business points to a greater uptake of 5 year fixed rate products – a number which has more than doubled since 2012. One year fixed rate deals are more or less obsolete with smart investors now adopting fixed rate deals in order to protect themselves from predicted rate rises.

Investors are conscious of the recent warning from Bank of England Governor Mark Carney that interest rates will go up. However, he has promised they will be materially lower in the medium term

than they have been historically. Nevertheless he has cautioned that a rise will have to be made soon if wider economic problems are to be avoided. It was inevitable that the base rate would not remain at a historic low of 0.5 percent forever. Many investors would have enjoyed a good five year run if they were on a tracker rate.

Lloyds Bank, in particular, are currently offering new customers an iPad mini in the latest attempt by lenders to attract mortgage borrowers. Fixed five year rate deals provide certainty to landlords and with a choice of 128 products on the market today, maybe now is good time to shop around for

that deal.

Love Your Postcode Estate Agents are this year's multi gold award winning estate agents for customer experience. Our dedicated investor and corporate account line is open from 9am to 6pm on free phone 0800 862 0871 or you may wish to visit us on line at loveyourpostcode.com.

With experience of over 700 managed properties across the United Kingdom, members of a regulatory redress scheme, twenty one property specialists and nationwide coverage, all the signs point to one estate agent.



New direction with S-Cross

By John Griffiths

The march of the SUV, or sports utility vehicle, shows no signs of slowing down with several manufacturers announcing their first foray into this field in the past few months.

SUVs are mainly cars with the tall, chunky looks of the off-roader even if most of them aren't: buyers seem to balance appearances with two-wheel drive to save weight, fuel and costs.

It may be a surprise then that Suzuki, with its iconic Vitara and a history of almost half a century of 4x4s, has gone down a different route with its new S-Cross.

Still in car parlance a crossover (the clue's in the name), it's a family-sized hatchback with two or four-wheel drive options that's relatively economical to buy and run.

Top models have a newly developed and sophisticated four-wheel drive system to suit most conditions while remaining lively and economical – and with prices from £21,549 it costs less than some of its two-wheel drive opposition.

Its ALLGRIP system was made specifically for this car: not as many compromises as the traditional full-blown system in the Jimny, but more flexible than the ultra-lightweight rear differential developed for the smaller Swift 4x4.

It gives the S-Cross extra capability on and off-road, where the main limiting factor is ground clearance. It certainly made light work of the forest tracks and streams encountered on a test route in the north of England, but

unlike a traditional 4x4 remained economical, sharp handling and a comfortable ride on the highway.

There are two engine options, a 1.6 petrol and 1.6 diesel. The petrol version is capable of averaging almost 40mpg while the diesel's figure is a frugal 64mpg. Their 0 to 62mph sprint times are 12 and 13 seconds respectively.

Suzuki's engineers have also come up with an excellent compromise with the suspension: it's supple enough to soak up the bumps on rough tracks yet not so soft as to give you a roly-poly ride on the road. Its dimensions, without the top heavy architecture of some SUV's, helps too.

Positive

The steering is nicely weighted and positive, and from its road manners you'd never guess this was a car quite capable of roughing it.

It's as quiet and relaxing to drive as any modern hatchback, it's light but particularly stiff body aiding performance and economy while also reducing noise in the cabin.

No-one, Suzuki included, imagines you'd buy an S-Cross for serious mud-plugging: it's more for the country dweller who has rough and muddy lanes to travel, or someone who wants extra safety and security in bad weather.

The ALLGRIP control gives you a clue. The basic setting is 'auto' so the car remains in front wheel drive until they start to slip, when the rear wheels are brought into play too. It's there as a safety back-up while giving you best day to day economy.

The 'snow' setting, unsurprisingly, uses four-wheel drive as the default setting while also optimises steering and accelerator inputs for maximum traction.



The 'lock' mode gives you four-wheel drive for getting yourself out of mud, sand or snow.

Press 'Sport' mode and you certainly notice a difference in the S-Cross. It sharpens up the steering and the throttle response, while automatically diverting another 20 per cent of the engine's torque to the rear wheels – giving you a taste of the cornering abilities of a rally car.

There are 13 different S-Cross models, starting with a two-wheel drive petrol version at £14,999. There are two automatic versions, one two wheel drive and one four wheel drive, with a continuously variable transmission.

The top of the range versions are all fitted with ALLGRIP 4WD and are also the highest trim levels, which explains their price tag of up

to £23,549 for the diesel flagship. The diesels also get a six-speed transmission compared to the petrol's five gears.

The diesel is also the most economical, with an official average of 64.2mpg and 114g/km of CO2 emissions compared to the petrol's 51.3mpg and 135g/km.

The decision, as always, will depend on how much you have to spend and, with diesel up to 10p per litre more expensive these days, how many miles you do as to which is best for you.

It's worthy of note, though, that the 4WD version is only two to three mpg thirstier than the two-wheel drives: surely a measure of just how efficient the ALLGRIP system is.

The diesel does have more advantages for

the driver, though. It is more flexible, thanks to the extra gear, plus a similar 120PS of power but more than double the torque.

While it may look smaller than some SUV rivals, the S-Cross is almost surprisingly roomy inside, with decent leg and headroom for five adults. It also has a generous cargo space, with a 430-litre boot for your luggage, which you can double by folding down the rear seats.

The cabin has a solid, quality feel to it with refreshingly clear and logical controls.

The company has pitched the car just right: a spacious family transporter with an efficient four-wheel drive system for safety and flexibility without sacrificing much in the way of performance or precious fuel.

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Official Fuel Consumption Figures for the Suzuki Swift range mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km): Urban 41.5-46.3 (6.8-6.1), Extra Urban 57.6-64.2 (4.9-4.4), Combined 50.4-56.5 (5.6-5.0), CO₂ emissions 128-116 g/km and for the Suzuki SX4 range mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km): Urban 32.5-42.8 (8.7-6.6), Extra Urban 50.4-60.1 (5.6-4.7), Combined 42.2-53.3 (6.7-5.3), CO₂ emissions 155-139 g/km and for the Suzuki Splash range mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km): Urban 40.9-50.4 (6.9-5.6), Extra Urban 56.5-67.3 (5.0-4.2), Combined 49.6-60.1 (5.7-4.7), CO₂ emissions 131-109 g/km and for the Suzuki Alto range mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km): Urban 43.5-54.3 (6.5-5.2), Extra Urban 65.7-74.3 (4.3-3.8), Combined 55.4-65.7 (5.1-4.3), CO₂ emissions 118-99 g/km.

The above fuel consumption figures are based on an EU test for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real driving results. *Model shown: Swift SZ4 available from £12,199 (Metallic paint available at £430). *VAT free offer on Swift range: Swift 1.2 SZ2 3dr available from £8,999, including a customer saving of £1,800 to Swift 1.2 SZ4 5dr 4x4 available at £13,699 including customer saving of £2,740 which is equivalent to the VAT amount of the previous on the road price of £10,799 (SZ2 3dr) and £16,439 (SZ4 5dr 4x4). VAT free offer excludes Swift Sport.

*Model shown: SX4 SZ5 available from £13,249 (Metallic paint available at £430). *VAT free offer on SX4 range: SX4 1.6 SZ3 available from £10,495, including customer saving of £2,100 to SX4 SZ5 4x4 available at £13,249 including customer saving of £2,650 equivalent to VAT amount of previous on the road price of £12,595 (1.6 SZ3) and £15,899 (1.6 SZ5 4x4). *Model shown: Splash SZ4 available from £9,999 (Metallic paint available at £415). *VAT free offer on Splash range: Splash 1.0 SZ2 available from £7,999, including customer saving of £1,600 to Splash 1.2 SZ4 A/T available at £10,645 including customer saving of £2,129 equivalent to VAT amount of previous on the road price of £9,599 (SZ2) and £12,774 (SZ4 A/T). *Model shown: Alto SZ4 available from £7,999 (Metallic paint available at £399). *VAT free offer on Alto range: Alto 1.0 SZ available from £5,999, including customer saving of £1,200 to Alto 1.0 SZ4 A/T available at £8,625 including customer saving of £1,724 equivalent to VAT amount of previous on the road price of £7,199 (SZ) and £10,349 (SZ4 A/T). VAT equivalent reduction is not available on vehicle options or accessories. VAT Free offer excludes Swift Sport. For full details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. Offer subject to availability for vehicles privately registered between 1st October 2014 to 31st December 2014 from participating Authorised Suzuki Dealers only. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers. All prices and specifications correct at time of going to print.



Volvo XC-90 is a roaring success

The First Edition of Volvo's all-new XC90 - 1,927 individually numbered cars only available for sale online - sold out in 47 hours.

Most of the cars were reserved within one hour from when the sale started. At its peak, seven cars were sold every minute.

UK customers secured 55 of the First Edition models, which will be delivered in April 2015. Alain Visser, senior vice president, marketing, sales and customer service of Volvo Car Group, said: "We are very pleased,

but not really surprised. The huge interest in the XC90 escalated to astronomical levels after the world premiere last week."

An innovative sales launch saw the First Edition cars, which celebrate the year Volvo was founded, made available to customers online only at www.volvocars.com

The 1,927 First Edition owners will get a high-spec car with uniquely numbered tread plates and a distinctive badge on the tailgate. UK First Edition models will be powered by a high-performance diesel engine from Volvo's new four-cylinder Drive-E powertrains. The D5 twin turbo diesel engine boasts 225 horsepower and is mated to an



Used cars at great prices

If you are looking to buy your next quality used car at a great value price Halesowen Autos is the place to begin and end your search.

Based half a mile from Halesowen Town centre this friendly independent dealership has a wealth of experience in supplying quality used cars to customers throughout the West Midlands.

You'll find a hand-picked selection of quality, previously-owned vehicles from popular manufacturers, and all cars are competitively priced and professionally presented.

Part exchange deals are welcome and competitive finance is available on most cars, subject to status. With

this in mind let's take a quick look at just two of the many exceptional used cars currently displayed at Halesowen Autos.

We start with the 09-plate MINI Cooper 1.6-litre finished in Silver metallic paint and featuring a black roof. It comes with just 66,130 miles on the clock, air conditioning, a stereo radio/CD player and tinted glass.

The Mini costs little to run, it's stylish and it's really good fun to drive with exceptional handling and roadholding.

Halesowen Autos is now offering this fine example for just £6,795, that's a reduction of £200 off its original list price.

How's that for value!

Next we turn our attention to the fifth-generation, 08-plate Red metallic

Ford Fiesta 1.25 Style Climate three-door with 42,212 miles, a price tag of only £3,995 and a whole host of useful extra features which include Ford's 'Quickclear' heated front screen, air conditioning, alloy wheels, electric windows and a stereo radio/CD player. Always up amongst the UK best-sellers, Ford's Fiesta has always been acknowledged as a terrific driver's car and like the MINI is costs little to run. It's pretty good looking, too.

Be sure to visit Halesowen Autos to check out their terrific line-up of affordable used cars at 1 Cross Street, Halesowen B63 4RT. Call (0121) 501 3840 or log onto www.halesowenautos.co.uk for further information, and prepare to be impressed with what you find!



Halesowen Autos

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<p>08/08 Range Rover HSE TDV8 Auto 60k, White, Alloys, Leather, Sat Nav, TV £24995</p>	<p>08/08 Fiat Panda 1.4 100hp, 39k, *LOW INSURANCE* Black, Alloys, Air Con, CD £4495 / £22 Per Week</p>
<p>09/09 Mini 1.6 Cooper 66k, Silver with Black Roof, Alloys, Air Con, CD Player £6795 / £35 Per Week</p>	<p>08/08 Volkswagen Polo 1.2 E, *ONLY 28k MILES* *LOW INSURANCE* Silver, CD £4495 / £22 Per Week</p>
<p>10/10 Ford Focus 1.6 Zetec AUTOMATIC 3dr, 35k, Blue, Alloys, Air Con, CD, E/windows £6295 / £29 Per Week</p>	<p>08/08 Fiat Bravo 1.4 Dynamic 50k, Red, Alloys, Air Con, CD Player £4195 / £20 Per Week</p>
<p>08/08 Alfa Romeo MiTo 1.6 JTDM Lusso Diesel, 54k, Red, Leather, Alloys, Air Con, CD £5995 / £28 Per Week</p>	<p>05/05 Peugeot 407 SW SE 2.0 HDI Diesel Estate *PANORAMIC ROOF* 60k, Silver, Alloys, Air Con £3995 / £28 Per Week</p>
<p>08/08 Suzuki SX4 1.6 GLX ONLY 16k MILES, Silver, Alloys, Air Con, CD £5995 / £28 Per Week</p>	<p>08/08 Ford Fiesta 1.25 Style Climate, 42k, Red, Alloys, Climate Pack £3995 / £28 Per Week</p>
<p>05/05 Mini One 1.6 (Chilli) Convertible 50k, Orange, Alloys, Air Con, Half Leather £5495 / £31 Per Week</p>	<p>07/07 Ford Fiesta 1.4 TD Diesel ONLY 37k MILES, Apple Green, Alloys, CD £3995 / £28 Per Week</p>
<p>08/07 Vauxhall Astra 1.3 CDTi Diesel 16V Life, only 31k miles, Silver, Air Con, CD £4995 / £31 Per Week</p>	<p>07/07 Suzuki Swift 1.3 GL one owner 47k, Burnt Orange, CD Player, E/Windows £3995 / £28 Per Week</p>
<p>07/07 Renault Clio 1.6 Privilege Automatic, ONLY 28k MILES*, Beige, Alloys, Air Con £4795 / £29 Per Week</p>	<p>06/06 Chevrolet Lacetti 1.6 SX 49k, Blue, Alloys, CD Was £2495 Now £2295 / £14 Per Week</p>
<p>03/03 Toyota RAV4 2.0 VVTi Vaux AUTOMATIC ONLY 53k MILES, Blue, Full Leather, Alloys, Air Con £4695 / £38 Per Week</p>	<p>01/01 Skoda Octavia 1.8 Elegance T 4WD Estate, 94k, Silver, Alloys, Climate £1995</p>

Finance example: Vauxhall Astra 1.3 CDTi Diesel, Cash Price £4995, Deposit £300, Amount of credit £4695, Fixed interest rate 6.25% Flat rate, 12% APR, 48 Payments of £122.28 (£30.50 per week) Total amount payable £6169.44 (Excludes £150 Document fee and £150 Completion fee, Subject to status)

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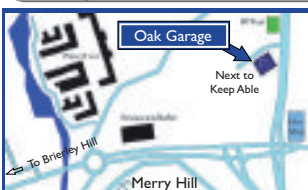
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Practical Mini for family use

BMW hopes that by adding two extra doors to the recently launched third generation Mini, it will introduce the car to a wider audience.

By Matt Joy

At the risk of stating the obvious, the main focus here is the addition of two extra doors. Granted, the Countryman might also be a genuine five-door car, but Mini's take on this apparent duplication is that the Countryman is an SUV, albeit a small one, making it an unfair comparison.

So, what we have here is a slightly longer Mini hatch – all the better to accommodate rear seat occupants – boasting more cabin and boot space, plus the added flexibility to attract families and active types seeking a more practical Mini hatch.

You'll have to look closely to really spot the changes in the transition from three to five doors. The extra length is modest (72mm between the wheels) and it does little to harm the look of this third-gen car's already expanded dimensions.

Inside this five-door model is the now familiar new-look Mini fascia, complete with oversize central display, tweaked minor controls, the inclusion of a BMW-style i-Drive controller and chunky steering wheel. The result is a

car that retains the trademark BMW era Mini look, but also boasts a more mature, grown-up feel.

No question, this expanded Mini will be a welcome sight for anyone with a small family looking to remain faithful to the brand. The car's rear doors aren't the largest and access could be more accommodating, but once inside there's reasonable legroom even for adults. The car's boot also receives a welcome boost, as along with the flexible boot floor and additional storage, folding the rear seats liberates a decent amount of space.

Despite the expanded dimensions of the five-door car, it remains loyal to the fun ethos of the three-door model. On the move, the extra length and weight barely registers, which means you can still throw the car around if so inclined.

At launch, the choice between Cooper S petrol and Cooper SD diesel means the difference between a feisty, rev-happy experience and a more relaxed but no less potent one, respectively.

Both 2.0-litre four-cylinder units, they can also be had with BMW's six-speed dual clutch transmissions if you don't fancy the extra workout associated with the manual shifters.

Factor in a switchable eco-normal-

sport mode plus optional electronic sports damping and you don't need to sacrifice a thing in the pursuit of a performance Mini driving experience despite the car's increased focus on practicality.

The Mini is an unusual proposition in that it's often hard to make direct comparisons with so say rival cars. In basic trim the car benefits from a few options, although these can prove surprisingly good value.

Likewise engine choice, as BMW's efforts to reduce consumption and emissions have resulted in some seriously tax-friendly numbers.

Plus, spec your car well and you won't lose your shirt when it's time to sell it on.

Continuing the Mini's classless approach to motoring, company executives routinely state that there's no one definitive buyer profile.

That said, it's pretty obvious that the five-door hatch will likely appeal to buyers seeking a little more space for a growing family. And if you just want some added versatility this model is probably a smarter choice than the larger Countryman, especially if the whole SUV culture isn't your thing.

This car summed up in a single word is practical.

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Navara – picks up more

By Sharon Walters

Nissan's versatile Navara pick-up is to benefit from a number of significant improvements for the 2015 model year.

The latest Navara, which is launched at the IAA Commercial Vehicle Show in Hannover this week has added safety features, new standard equipment across the range, an upgraded interior trim and new body colours.

Every model in the Navara range now has 17-inch alloy wheels and Vehicle Dynamic Control (VDC) as standard.

Two new metallic body colours – bronze and grey – have been introduced while new trim can be found on SE and LE versions, offering not only improved look and feel but also enhanced quality. The overall objective is to deliver enhanced value to the features, by improving customer benefits of up to £800.

Another significant introduction is the arrival of an SE model powered by a 144hp version of the familiar 2.5-litre dCi diesel engine.

This engine, first seen in the fleet-oriented XE version launched last year, offers an ideal compromise between performance and efficiency. Delivering 144hp, it produces 215g/km of CO2 emissions (7g/km improvement vs 190HP) while the combined fuel economy is 8.2l/100 kms.

SE equipment provides a number of enhancements over the XE model, with automatic air conditioning and a combined CD

tuner with Bluetooth connectivity being the principal benefits.

Additional SE specs vs the XE model include side airbags, chrome front grille, cruise control with speed limiter and driver seat height adjustment. Other standard features are remote central locking, front fog lamps, side steps, rear headrests and heated door mirrors.

XE, SE and top LE versions are also all available with a 190hp version of the dCi engine, while the top of the range LE models – accounting for around 10 per cent of all Navara sales – are also available with the smooth and potent 231hp 3.0L V6 diesel which is coupled to Nissan's advanced seven-speed automatic gearbox.

Premium

LE versions have a raft of sophisticated equipment as standard including premium navigation, a reversing camera, roof rails, heated seats, cruise control, privacy glass, rain sensor and electrically folding door mirrors.

A Special Version of the LE V6 goes even further by adding leather/alcantara trim, 18-inch alloy wheels, chrome touches and a steel bar at the front for added protection.

In other respects, the MY15 Navara range continues as before to provide a mixture of comfort and style in a robust and hugely capable pick-up.

Its rugged ladder-frame chassis has independent front suspension by double wishbones and coil springs.

At the rear, there's a rigid axle and over



Added safety features, new standard equipment across the range, an upgraded interior trim and new body colours

slung leaf springs that provide excellent payload levels at the same time as giving the comfort, ride and handling expected from a SUV.

A part-time four-wheel drive system powers the rear wheels under normal conditions or splits the torque 50/50 between front and rear axles when 4WD mode is engaged.

High and low ratio modes mean outstanding levels of traction whether on or off road. A rear differential lock – which oper-

ates only in low ratio four-wheel drive – provides further help should a rear wheel lose traction on slippery surfaces. Control is via a rotary switch conveniently located on the centre console.

"The provision of VDC across the entire Navara range is a important bonus for all Navara drivers, while the arrival of the new 144hp SE version will have significant appeal to fleet operators and owner/drivers alike," said Sebastian Viet, chief marketing manager Nissan LCV BU.



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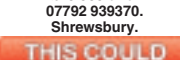
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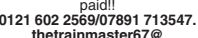
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Pool club misses out on top spot

National League Round 1, Nuneaton
THE quality of competition in the premier division is high but Halesowen swimmers rose to the challenge from the very first event of the evening.

After the opening relays, were 10 points ahead and it was not until the halfway point that Leicester Sharks overturned the lead.

The swimmers battled hard and went into the final group of relays just three points from the lead but despite a strong finish ended the night as runners-up by a single point.

Double individual event winners were Chloe Finch in the individual medley and freestyle, James Cuthbert in the breaststroke and butterfly, Mark Laing in the butterfly and freestyle, Jack Simpson in the backstroke and freestyle and Richard Spoor in the individual medley and breaststroke.

Other individual event winners were Emma Bird in the backstroke, Lily Merrell in the breaststroke and Kate Morrice and Josh Bradley in the freestyle. Final Point scores were: Leicester Sharks A 209, Halesowen 208, Chase 178, Nuneaton & Bedworth A 176, City of Derby B 156, Shrewsbury 121.

Pryce is right to take out Dudley

Team Dudley 1 AFC Ludlow 2
TEAM Dudley were searching for the first home victory of the season.

The game got under way and the early exchanges were quite even. With just two minutes left in the half the ball hit the glove of Liam Jones and fell at the feet of Dale Hodge to tap in to the empty net.

With 25 minutes left James Hill crossed to Nettleford who moved smashed a half volley into the bottom corner.

Then after half chances to both sides the open game found it's winner. Liam Jones blocked a shot with his feet, the rebound fell to Jack Pryce who stroked past to score.

Tivs still can't find the scoring streak

Stafford Rangers FC 0 Tividale FC 0
TIVIDALE played out their second consecutive goal less draw in three days this time against our old foe Stafford Rangers.

It is now feeling like they have to play either Stafford or Leek once a week as this was the third time that we had met in just over a fortnight.

Stafford were intent on taking the game to the visitors from the off and started the better and Christian Dacres tried a speculative effort that went wide in the opening seconds.

The first real chance then fell to Rangers

Football
midfielder Levi Reid on 12 minutes when his shot came back off the cross bar with Tividale keeper Charles Price beaten.

On 17 minutes the visitors had their first threat on goal when Karl Edwards looked to be through but Rangers defender Wayne Daniel just cleared the danger with a last gasp tackle.

A minute later Tividale were on the attack again this time Rangers keeper Adam Whitehouse denying Jazz Luckie but could

only parry his effort to Ryan Winwood who hit the rebound wide. It was the 39th minute before either keeper was tested again this time Price got down well to a Dacres effort and turned it around the post.

Tamely From the resulting corner Daniel headed well wide.

The best chance of a very tight opening to the second period fell to Ryan Wynter but after great work between him and Reid his shot had no pace and went tamely into the arms of Price.

Sam Williams then forced another save

from Whitehouse and the keeper then produced another great one handed save, this time to deny Luckie again. While at the other end the lively Stanley Mugisha and Dacres both had shots comfortably saved by Price.

It was not until the last 10 minutes that the game began to get stretched. First Ryan Edmonds headed over the bar for Rangers.

Then Tividale had a couple of chances in the dying seconds when somehow efforts from Luckie and Nigel Penney were kept out to keep the game scoreless.

Hughes prepares for the big one

TIPTON'S Jamie Hughes will get another big break on TV at the BDO World Championship after a career-best week for the rising darter.

The 28-year-old banked £10,000 for a run to the Winmau World Masters final and is now preparing for the big one at Lakeside in January.

With his appearance at the biggest event on the organisation's calendar already in the bag, only Martin Phillips could stop him for the trophy.

His star turn was seen across several countries live on Euro Sport and BBC viewers will see if he can be a star package again in the New Year.

Hughes will tackle either David Cameron or Michel van der Horst, who must play each other in the qualifying round for the right to face him.

'Youzza' flew out of the blocks against Phillips at the Hull Sports Arena, taking a two-set lead before the stunned Welshman manage to pull level.

Phillips came back from a break in play on fire and took the next three sets, before Hughes replied with one of his own.

At one leg away from losing the game, he clawed another back, but big scores pushed Phillips on and he won 7-3.

Coventry & North Warwick 3 OHHC 1sts 0 OLD Halesonians Hockey Club Men's 1st XI had a game to forget, when they fell to a 3-0 defeat against Coventry and North Warwick, in the second game of the season.

Hales faced the newly relegated side with high expectations from last week's draw versus Edgbaston, but they were left deflated when they were simply outplayed.

Hales knew they must wait their time for their chances and it came when Cole Hickman had his shot saved by the Coventry goalkeeper, who also made several excellent saves throughout the game.

This was one of very few chances for the visitors, and they found themselves on the back foot, when Coventry took the lead.

They made it 2-0 before half time when the Hales defence were left outnumbered.

Coventry extended their lead to 3-0, and it appeared there was no way back for Hales who lacked sufficient composure to get back into the game.

The Men's 1st XI host Bridgnorth on Saturday, 1.30pm start at Ormiston Forge Academy.

Stratford 3 OHHC 3rds 0
Old Hales were just about holding their own but they only have themselves to blame for the first goal after the ball was given away in their own D and the Stratford striker rolled it past the Old Hales keeper Ade Lockeyer.

Stratford's second came soon after a well-worked counterattack down the right and the ball across



The Old Halesonians Hockey Club Badgers squad

Hockey

was perfect for the Stratford player to finish into an empty goal.

Stratford soon made it 3-0 from a moment of magic from an individual effort.

Old Hales were still creating chances at the end of the first half and went very close from a short corner but the half time score was 3-0. In the second half, Hales were unable to get back into the game.

OHHC Badgers 1 Lichfield 1

Old Halesonians Badgers team faced Lichfield, at the brand new pitch at King Edward VI School Five Ways, where the Junior section will now be based.

Both sides enjoyed the spectacular surface, with excellent performances all round. Joe Shackleton scored the only game of the goal for the hosts.

Other Results: OHHC 2nds 1-0 Harborne - goalscorer Matt Cole; Bournville 4-0 OHHC Ladies 1sts; OHHC Ladies 2nds 3 Kings Heath 7 - goalscorers Molly Kelly, Rae Andrews, Stacey Twist; OHHC 4ths 1 Worcester 6 - goalscorer Andy Cole.

Clarke ready to take it out on opponent

HALESOWEN'S Lennox Clarke has vowed to take his injury frustrations out on Raimonds Sneidze when he returns to action in Gloucester next week, writes Craig Birch.

The unbeaten super middleweight was forced to pull out of a tasty encounter with Lincoln's Ryan Clark last month on the eve of the contest, after picking up a back injury.

It was only a niggly but Clarke wouldn't take the risk unless he was

at full pelt, so the bout was rescheduled for next Friday's fight night at the Hatherley Manor Hotel.

Clark has since been replaced by the Latvian but wouldn't have been able to box anyway, having broken his jaw fighting in London last weekend.

They may yet meet again down the line for a grudge match and, in the meantime, Clarke is determined to make up for lost ground.

The 23-year-old is looking to smash

through Sneidze, before he competes again at Walsall Town Hall on Saturday November 29, and two victories would take him to half-a-dozen wins.

He said: "I don't know much about Sneidze but, after the last couple of weeks of camp, I know he's in for a hard night. It's been a frustrating few weeks, but I'm going to take all my frustration out on him!"

For tickets, priced at £30 and £50 ringside, call 07772 466 790.

Weakened Brummies are beaten

Handsworth III 28 Birmingham Barbarians 12
A weakened Barbarians with just 14 players put in a spirited display despite losing.

A stunning solo try from fly-half Aaron Rudd opened the scoring for the visitors.

Rudd led the opposition a merry dance with a mazy, weaving run from his own half before touching down under the posts and converting the extras.

Rudd went off soon after through injury and Handsworth took full advantage to level the scores before the break with a converted try.

Two quick tries from the hosts put the Barbarians on the back foot.

Handsworth notched a late try.



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SPORT

Score flaw

Tivs squad can't find winning ways

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Coventry blues

Old Hales in a game best forgotten

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A good run for young athletes

THIS weekend saw some good performances from the young Dudley and Stourbridge Harriers in the first West Midlands Young Athletes cross country league at Warwick.

On a very muddy course and with 120 runners taking part in the Under-13 boys race, Thomas Slater had a great run, finishing in an excellent sixth place.

Adam Horton was 54th, Adam Bodin 69th and Harry Walters in his first cross country race a solid 70th.

In the men's Under-17s race Elliot Jones had a good run to finish 13th, whilst in the girls' Under-13s Grace Slater ran well for 18th in a field of more than 150 runners, with Jasmine Priantoro 81st, Chloe Priest 105th and Niamh Crowe 135th completing the team.

The girls' Under-11s race saw Emmie Corbett and Chloe Everton battle it out all the way round the 1,600 metre course, with Emmie finishing 23rd and Chloe just behind in 26th.

Jay Priantoro was 31st and Reece Ashfield 51st in the Under-15s boys' race and Amelia Davies 85th in Under-15s girls' race.

Completing a very competitive day out for the Slater family, older sister to Tom and Grace, Daisy finished 40th in the Under-17s race.

Partridge is up for change

DUDLEY'S Ryan Partridge says he's more than capable of smashing through southpaws as he prepares for action at Wolverhampton Civic Hall, writes Craig Birch.

The 21-year-old light middleweight is looking to make another big statement on next week's Friday night, with the BoxNation cameras in attendance.

Partridge, another graduate of Priory Park Boxing Club, made Ben Robinson retire after two rounds on his pro debut at the Venue in Dudley last month.

Now 'the Lion Heart' goes in with experienced switch-hitter Liam Griffiths for four rounds, but insists the change of stance won't knock him out of his stride.

He said: "I used to spar with this lad called Kaz Rogers at Priory for three years and he was a southpaw, so I know exactly what to expect when this comes around."

Heathens are chasing treble prize glory

CRADLEY Heathens are chasing the treble – and it will all be decided over the next fortnight.

The nomadic club, who stage home matches at Wolverhampton's Monmore Green Stadium, host Coventry in the first leg of their National League Grand Final on October 21.

The following night they head to King's Lynn for the first leg of the Knockout Cup Final, with the return leg of both the following week.

And on Sunday October 26 they line up in the National League Fours Championship

by Nigel Pearson

at Coventry. Boss Will Pottinger admits the team will need to stay focussed with such a hectic end to the season.

He said: "We need everyone to be on form, this is the business end of the season and we also have the National League Fours on October 26 at Coventry to go for," he said.

"We've been the best team in the league all season, but we never take anything for granted and there will be no complacency,

we will just continue to give it our best and see what we can achieve.

"Hopefully we can do it all again – that would be an amazing achievement for everyone at the club, but there is a lot of work to do over the next fortnight," he added.

Complacency

Skipper Paul Starke is also keen to avoid complacency after what has been a stunning season for the side.

"We've had a great season but we can't afford any slip-ups now, so it's important

we try and do everything we can to keep our form going," he said. "We've showed what we are capable of, but we need to make sure we don't take our foot off the gas because Coventry are a team that can cause us problems when it comes to the play-off final.

"Obviously with how we've performed we are confident we can get the job done, because everyone has been on great form and scoring points all season," said Pottinger.

"But we know we can't get too over confident – anything can happen in speedway so we just need to do everything we can to make sure we finish the job."

Masters record equalled

2014 George Masters Finals

IN front of a large crowd at the George Bowling Club Gary Ellis from Greater Manchester picked up the £1,000 first prize and a record equalling fifth Masters Title defeating Craig Barker from Staffordshire in the final.

Ellis stood out in a high quality field bowling the green well all day. In his 1st round game he comfortably despatched Staffordshire's Simon Homer 21-12 while Barker defeated Carl Fielding from W&W 31-23.

In the second round Ellis had another comfortable win beating Mike Tunstall from Mersyside 31-20 while Barker despatched Yorkshires Graeme Wilson 31-21.

At the semi-final stage Ellis beat top North Lancs bowler Simon Coupe 31-23 while Barker came from well down in one of the games of the day to beat Darren Plenderleith from North Mids 31-30.

In the final Ellis built up an early seven-shot advantage and while Barker got to within two shots and had a chance to level the game the quality of Ellis shone through as he won 31-26.

Tipton end up in Eaton mess

STRUGGLING Tipton were beaten 4-1 by Midland Premier side Long Eaton Utd.

Brad Wells put the visitors in front with a header, then Jordan Blayden conceded a penalty. Lee Fell struck his side's second goal.

Robbie Duffield got one back for Tipton but Fell added his second and Elliott King completed the scoring.

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LATE GOAL SPLITS SPOILS FOR YELTZ

Ilkeston 2 Halesowen 2

A last minute penalty cost The Yeltz all three points, as high-flying Ilkeston scored a last minute equaliser to snatch a point in Derbyshire.

Yeltz made five changes to the side beaten by Guiseley on Saturday, with Aaron Griffiths, Elliott Turner, Neil Mackenzie, Tom Tonks and Dan Bragoli all in.

The first chance Ilkeston had resulted with a goal, as David Morgan's free kick flew into the box and was nodded into the net by Halesowen's own Curtis Tilt, whose attempted clearing header flew into the net.

However, Mackenzie showed his attacking presence was something that had been missing on Saturday, as his long range effort fizzed just past the post.

Advantage

Ilkeston nearly doubled their advantage on 38 minutes, as Tyrell Waite's shot smashed off the inside of the post and came back into play.

The Yeltz got the equaliser they were looking for a minute later, as Mackenzie chested the ball down and he then blasted the ball into the bottom right hand corner.

The second half had dominated by Halesowen and they were finally rewarded for their efforts when Iyseden Christie was gifted too much space in the box, and he was able to poke the ball into the net.

But with minutes of added time left, Halesowen conceded a soft penalty to throw Ilkeston a lifeline.

Football

Up stepped substitute Rob Duffy, who converted the penalty comfortably and send the Yeltz home disappointed after an impressive display.

Halesowen: Matthew Sargeant, Kristian Green, Aaron Griffiths, Danny Bragoli (Aaron Forde), Joe Hull, Curtis Tilt, Joel Kettle, Tom Tonks (Robert Thompson-Brown), Iyseden Christie, Neil Mackenzie, Elliott Turner. Unused Subs: Asa Charlton, Ben Haseley, Chris Lait.

Guiseley 3 Halesowen 0
Halesowen's FA Cup run came to a heart-breaking end as they were outplayed by Conference North heavyweights Guiseley.

Halesowen couldn't handle the strength of the Guiseley attack and The Lions broke the deadlock through Nicky Boshell.

Guiseley doubled their lead two minutes before the break, as Boshell's blocked shot flew into the path of Gavin Rothery who poked the ball into the net.

The game was put out of Halesowen's reach thanks to Wayne Brooksby who hit the ball under Sargeant.

Hales have to battle to overcome Sandbach



Callum Young looking to force his way through the Sandbach defence. Picture Dan Corcoran

Hales 27 Sandbach 24

THE scene was set again at Wassell Grove for a dour battle with Hales looking to spoil the visitors unbeaten season.

Sandbach were determined to maintain their status with a fit, expansive team looking to run from everywhere.

Loz Breeze took possession and drove over for his first try. Chris Hooper converted. A loose maul in

the Sandbach 22 saw Harris feed Hooper who hit an outrageously perfect drop goal from at least 40 metres to lead 10-0.

The visitors broke through for their opening try. Hales had to regroup and this was going to be a long hard defensive battle. Breeze then powered his way through a narrow gap to score his second try under the posts. Hooper converted.

The visitors again came back with

excellent combined forward and back play for an attacking maul ending in a try and conversion. Second row Guy Field left the field with a yellow card.

This gave Sandbach the advantage which they capitalised on with an unconverted try to tie the scores. Sandbach fouled and Hooper took the lead to 20 - 17. Sandbach again came back with a try to lead.

Burrows hen scored and Hooper converted.

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